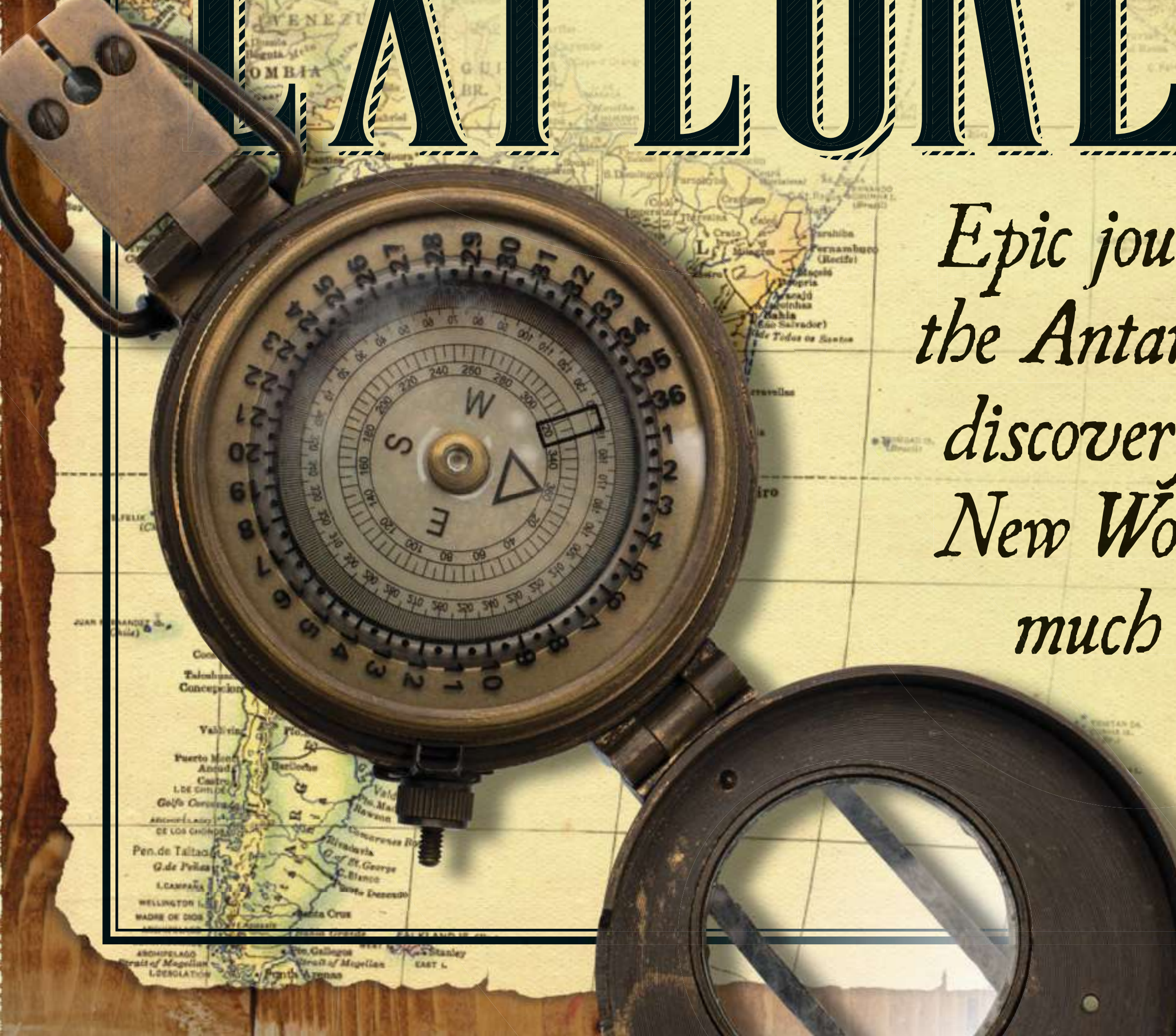
THE BOOK OF
HISTORIC EXPLORERS

Epic journeys to the Antarctic, the discovery of the New World and much more



ALL ABOUT HISTORY

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When the Romans printed the first world map 2,000 years ago, little did they know that half of it was missing. It wasn't until a handful of brave explorers dared to set sail across those never-ending oceans that we came to discover the New World. Here we delve deeper into the fascinating history of exploration, from Antarctic treks to space travel.

Alicea Francis Production Editor

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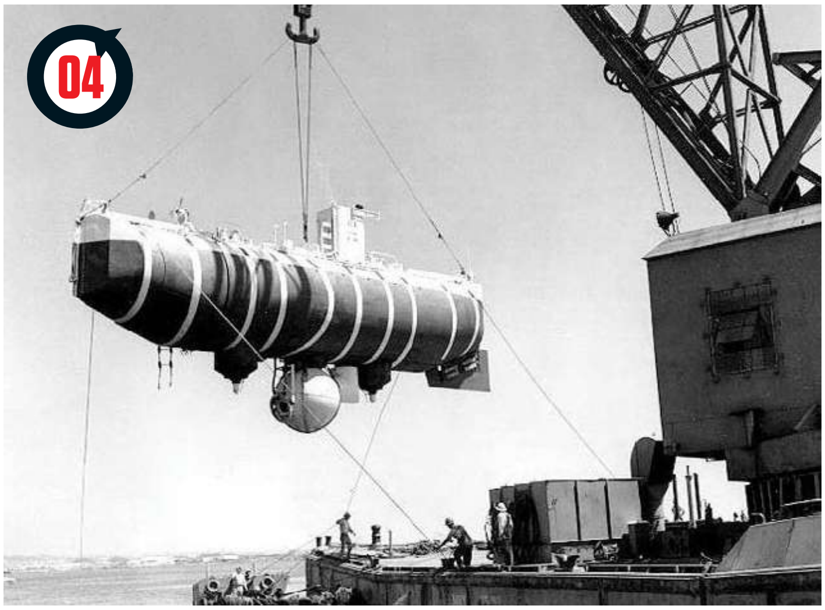
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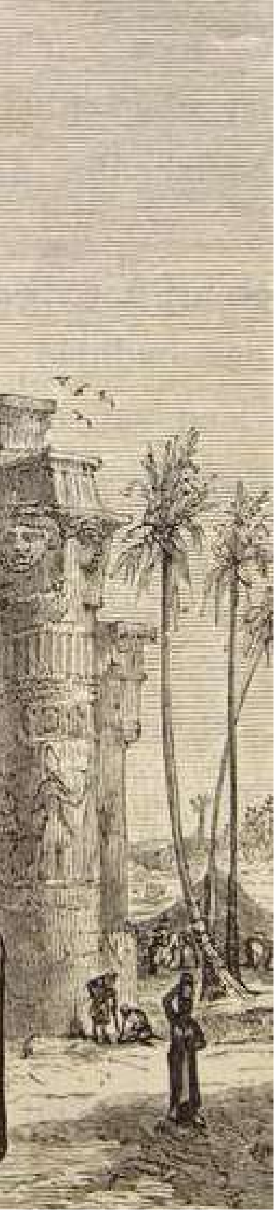

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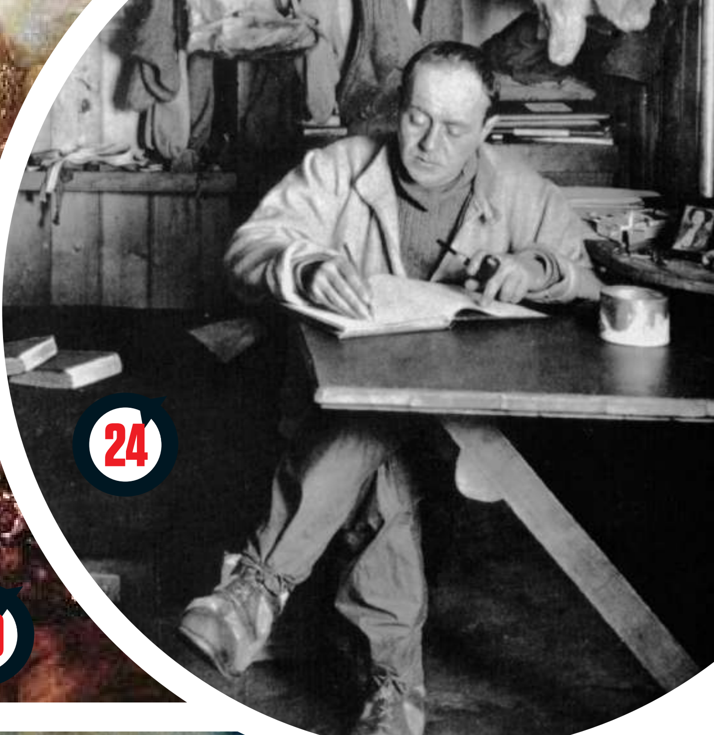
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Over 2,000 years of exploration

Greenland settled

GREENLAND 982

When Scandinavian explorer Erik the Red discovered a large island in the Atlantic Ocean he established a colony before returning to Norway to proclaim its greatness, referring to it as 'the green land'. He went back to Greenland later with over 500 more men, women and domestic animals. This led to the permanent colonisation of the island that still exists today.

Erik the Red

MARCO POLO'S TRAVELS BEGIN

VENICE, ITALY 1260

Marco Polo's amazing voyage of discovery into the heart of Asia was truly a remarkable feat, especially considering the lack of fast or safe travel at the time. On his journey he reported having met the great Mongolian ruler Kublai Khan, who showed him his fabled summer residence, and went on to visit many major cities including Beijing, Chengdu and Hangzhou. The entire trip took Polo 24 years and, after returning to Venice, he found his city at war with Genoa. Polo recounted his explorations in *Il Milione* (often translated as *The Travels Of Marco Polo*). This travelogue was written down by Rustichello da Pisa, who was imprisoned for a spell with Polo in Italy. Due to the second-hand nature of the information, many of Polo's accounts of Asia have been questioned by modern historians, with some since proven inaccurate.

Marco Polo on the road to Carthay

Exploration timeline

Indus charted
Ancient Greek explorer Scylax of Caryanda is sent by Persian King Darius I to chart the course of the Indus River.
515 BCE

Herodotus writes *Histories*
450-420 BCE

A fragment of Herodotus's *Histories*

Pytheas visits England
Greek explorer Pytheas voyages past Gibraltar and veers west off Brittany to visit Cornwall where he observes the trade in tin.
310 BCE

A big steppe forward
Chinese explorer Zhang Qian explores the steppes of Central Asia.
130s BCE

Zhang Quian

Ptolemy's Map
Greek astronomer and geographer Ptolemy creates a map of the ancient world that charts the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa along with the surrounding oceans.
150 BCE

Greenland discovered
982

Vikings reach the New World
Leif Erikson, son of Erik the Red, discovers the New World by landing in Newfoundland – which is now part of Canada.
1004-1005

Marco Polo departs Italy
1260

Ibn explores no more
After travelling over 120,700 kilometres (75,000 miles) in exploration of much of the Islamic world, Moroccan adventurer Ibn Battuta dies.
1368

Columbus sets out
Famous Italian explorer Christopher Columbus sets off on his first voyage to the Americas, funded by the Spanish monarchy.
1492

Calicut reached
Vasco da Gama becomes the first person to sail from Europe to India, landing in Calicut (now Kozhikode).
20 May 1498

Brazil discovered
Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral lands in Brazil accidentally while on a voyage to India.
1500

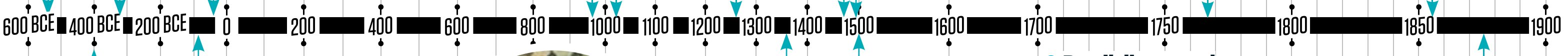
New Zealand mapped
British explorer James Cook undertakes a voyage that would see him chart New Zealand's entire coastline.
1768-1771

Transcontinental trip
Scottish explorer David Livingstone becomes the first Westerner to make a transcontinental journey across Africa.
1854-1856

David Livingstone

Source of the Nile
Henry Morton Stanley, a British explorer, confirms the source of the Nile as Lake Victoria.
1875

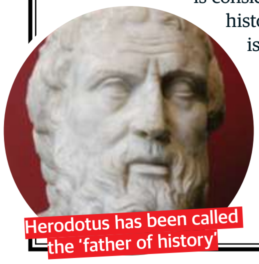
Henry Morton Stanley



Herodotus's travel guides

ANCIENT GREECE 450-420 BCE

Histories by Ancient Greek explorer-cum-historian Herodotus recounts the stories of many areas of the Mediterranean, eastern Asia and northern Africa, as recounted to him on his travels. *Histories* is considered the first-ever history book and Herodotus is held by some to be the 'father of history'; this is despite the fact that much of his text's accuracy has been called into question or disproved altogether.


Herodotus has been called the 'father of history'

Battuta sets off

MOROCCO EARLY-14TH CENTURY

Moroccan and Berber explorer Ibn Battuta became famous for his extensive travelling, with over 30 years' worth of adventures documented in his book *Rihla* (*Journey*). Battuta visited north and west Africa, eastern Europe, the Middle East, south Asia and much of China – a total distance that surpasses that achieved by Marco Polo threefold. Today, Battuta is considered one of the most-travelled people of all time.

Round the world

PORTUGAL 1519

The first circumnavigation of Earth was achieved between 1519 and 1522, led by Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan. Despite Magellan taking five ships and a crew of over 270 men, only one vessel and four of the original crew returned – the rest killed by war or disease. Even Magellan didn't survive, being killed in the Battle of Mactan, Philippines, in 1521.

Ferdinand Magellan

A journey up the Nile

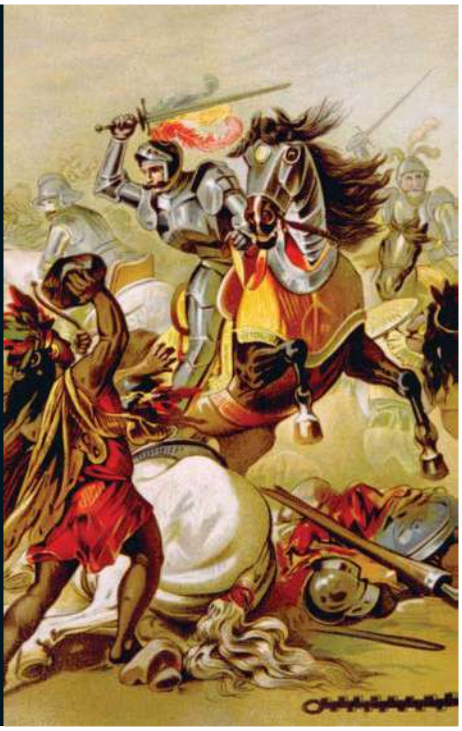
AFRICA 1875

By the 19th century the source of the River Nile had remained unknown for so long that it had become one of the most famous mysteries of the age, with many Western writers speculating on its point of origin. The enigma was finally cleared up by Welsh-born American adventurer Henry Morton Stanley in 1875, when he led an expedition up the Nile to Lake Victoria and confirmed this body of water as the starting point of the world's longest river.

HERNÁN CORTÉS CONQUERS THE AZTEC CIVILISATION

MEXICO 1521

One of the most well-travelled explorers in the Golden Age of Discovery was Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés, who brought the Aztec Empire under Spanish control. The mission, beginning in 1518 and ending with the destruction of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán in 1521, led to the city being renamed Mexico City and the first wave of Spanish settlers moving in. While Cortés expanded the West's knowledge of the Americas considerably, mapping large parts of Central America, his actions today are the source of much controversy. His use of both force and political guile to conquer the Aztecs threw the region into an extended period of turmoil, leaving many natives homeless or dead. This was exacerbated by Cortés's own restless desire for constant exploration; indeed, after having conquered the Aztecs, he left on a two-year trip to Honduras before returning to Spain.



Journey to the bottom of the Mariana Trench

PACIFIC OCEAN 1960

While much of Earth's surface had been charted by the mid-20th century, few had ventured into its depths. That changed on 23 January 1960, when Jacques Piccard and Don Walsh piloted the Bathyscaphe Trieste to the bottom of the Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench - the deepest known part of Earth. No other manned craft achieved the same feat until 2012, when American filmmaker James Cameron made the same trip in his submersible Deepsea Challenger.

North Pole reached
Adventurers Robert Peary and Matthew Henson become the first to make it to the North Pole.
1909

Machu Picchu rediscovered
US explorer Hiram Bingham rediscovers the Quechua citadel of Machu Picchu.
1911

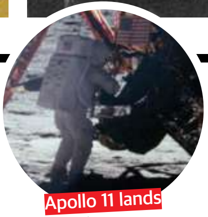
Ancient Incan city of Machu Picchu

Everest beaten
New Zealander Edmund Hillary, along with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, reach the summit of Mount Everest.
29 May 1953

Tenzing and Hillary

Moon landing
20 July 1969

Mariana Trench explored
23 January 1960



Apollo 11 lands

Bathyscaphe Trieste

Fiennes conquers Everest
Aged 65, adventurer Sir Ranulph Fiennes climbs the world's highest mountain, after two failed attempts.
2009

Earth's tallest peak Everest

1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010

Northwest Passage conquered
Norwegian Roald Amundsen successfully traverses the Northwest Passage through the Arctic Ocean.
1903-1906

Ernest Shackleton dies
5 January 1922

Transatlantic flight
American aviator Charles Lindbergh makes his nonstop flight from America to France, a distance of 5,800 kilometres (3,600 miles).
20-21 May 1927

Charles Lindbergh in front of the Spirit of St Louis

Low Earth orbit
American astronaut Sally Ride becomes the first US woman to enter low Earth orbit.
18 June 1983

Human power
British explorer Jason Lewis sets off on a mission to circumnavigate Earth by human power alone.
July 1994

Trip up the Amazon
Ex-British soldier Ed Stafford walks the length of the Amazon River, a feat never done before.
2010

Shackleton dies

SOUTH GEORGIA 1922

Famous explorer Ernest Shackleton undertook his last expedition in 1921. Leaving London on 24 September, the trip - described as an 'oceanographic and sub-Antarctic' exploration - visited Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where Shackleton suffered a heart attack. Ignoring calls to receive medical attention, he continued to South Georgia; unfortunately, Shackleton then suffered a second fatal heart attack.

First flight across the Atlantic

PARIS 1927

Charles Lindbergh made history on 21 May 1927 when he completed the first-ever, nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean from New York City to Paris, France. The feat won him instant international fame and, in the USA, he was awarded the prestigious Medal of Honor - the highest rank of military decoration.

At North Island, Rockwell Field, with Charles Lindbergh about to pilot the Spirit of St Louis

Armstrong lands on the Moon

SEA OF TRANQUILLITY 1969

While Neil Armstrong technically only explored a small part of one destination, the fact it was the Moon quickly cemented his reputation as one of the greatest explorers of all time. Over six days Armstrong and his colleague Buzz Aldrin spent just over two and a half hours exploring the lunar surface, taking photographs and conducting scientific experiments.

© Pavel Novak; Marie-Lan Nguyen; Getty; Alamy; Dirk Pons

Hall of Fame

10 ICONIC EXPLORERS

Whether by land, sea or air, exploring has aided our understanding of the world. Let's follow in some adventurers' intrepid footsteps…

MARCO POLO

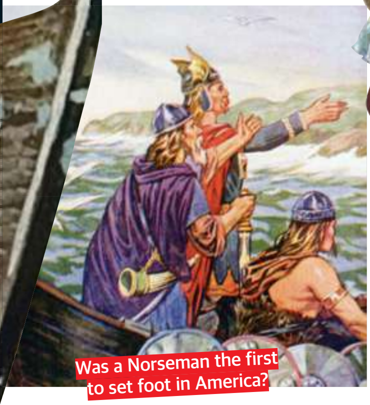
ITALIAN 1254-1324

At 17 years old, Marco Polo accompanied his father and uncle on their second trip to Asia, unaware he would spend a third of his life travelling. Residing in the land of Mongol ruler of China, Kublai Khan, Polo was sent on diplomatic missions around China. His closeness to Khan's daughter resulted in him escorting her to Persia via several South-east Asian countries before returning to Venice. Polo's adventures encouraged interest in China and likely inspired Columbus.

Leif Erikson

ICELANDIC 970-1020

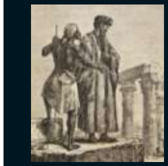
Whether or not Leif Erikson was the first European to land in North America, he got there 500 years before Columbus. When King Olaf I of Norway sent him as a Christian missionary to Greenland, it's believed Erikson was blown off course and discovered part of North America, which he named Vinland. Whether accidental or a deliberate detour based on another explorer's tale, Erikson went on to establish a small settlement in Vinland (ie Newfoundland, Canada).



Was a Norseman the first to set foot in America?

IBN BATTUTA

MOROCCAN 1304-1377

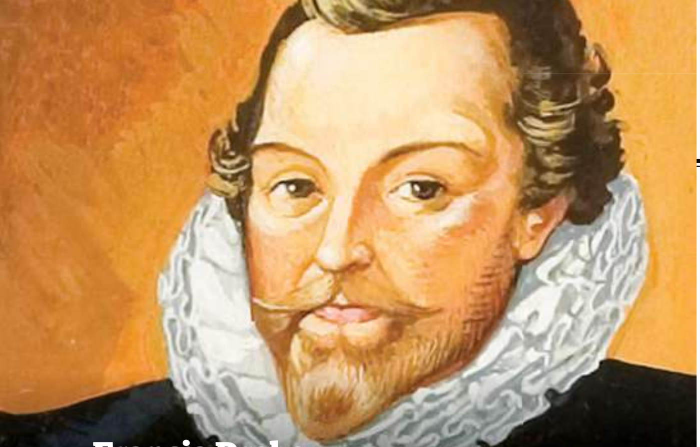


Covering over 112,650 kilometres (70,000 miles) and visiting more than 40 modern countries, Moroccan Muslim scholar Ibn Battuta is one of the most-travelled people of all time. Spending approximately 30 years of his life travelling extensively around the Islamic world, as he set out on a pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca, his adventures led him through non-Muslim lands too. Ibn Battuta encountered near-death experiences from bandits to sinking ships, but thankfully lived long enough to tell his tales.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

ITALIAN 1451-1506

Christopher Columbus did not 'discover' America. Unbeknown to him, natives had lived there for centuries – and been recorded by other Europeans. In fact, he stumbled across the continent rather accidentally while taking what he thought was a shortcut from Europe to Asia. Despite others landing there first, Columbus did make Europeans more aware of this New World, leading to increased contact, colonisation and the development of the modern Western world.



Francis Drake

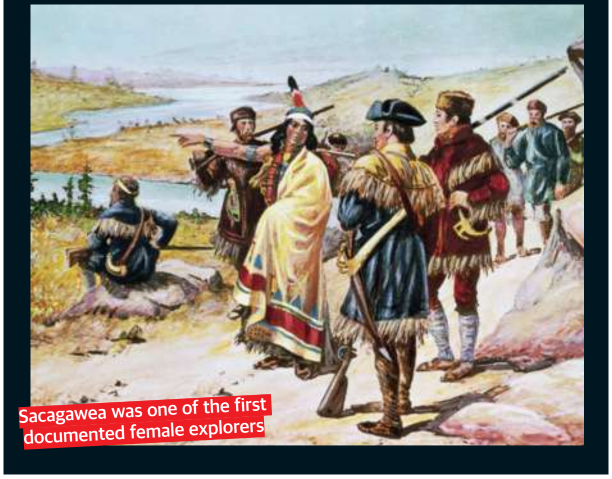
ENGLISH 1540-1596

On becoming a ship's captain in his twenties, Francis Drake was on his way to fulfilling his dream of finding an undiscovered land in the Pacific. Drake's travels took him to the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico before finally embarking on a secret expedition for Elizabeth I to the western coast of North America. At sea for almost three years, his circumnavigation helped identify the true geography of our planet.

SACAGAWEA

NATIVE AMERICAN 1788-1812

Born into the Shoshone tribe, Native American Sacagawea was kidnapped as a child, then 'acquired' by French-Canadian Toussaint Charbonneau, whom she married. When Lewis and Clark led the Corps of Discovery to their North Dakotan camp, they hired the pair as guides. Being female, Sacagawea was a symbol to other tribes that the group was peaceful and harmless, yet she played a fundamental role in helping to navigate, trade, translate and survive. Remarkably, the trip led them up the Missouri River to Sacagawea's homeland and family. A true explorer, though, she continued on the expedition, travelling approximately half of the 12,875-kilometre (8,000-mile) journey.



Sacagawea was one of the first documented female explorers

Roald Amundsen

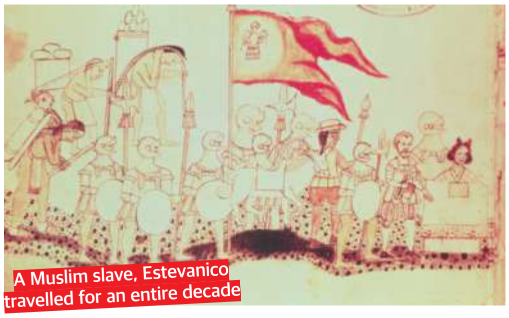
NORWEGIAN 1872-1928

Trading a life as a doctor for one as a polar explorer was an easy decision for Roald Amundsen. His heart set on exploring the Arctic, Amundsen quit uni and began his adventures via land, sea and air, first sailing through the Northwest Passage. Beaten to the North Pole, Amundsen was determined to be the first to reach the South Pole, and he was. Subsequently crossing the Arctic by air, Amundsen became one of the greatest polar explorers of all time.

ESTEVANICO

MOROCCAN 1500-1539

Muslim slave Estevanico was sold to a Spanish nobleman and taken on the Narváez expedition in 1527. Estevanico consequently ended up travelling for almost an entire decade, exploring North America and experiencing the challenges that accompanied such expeditions. Estevanico was likely the first African to visit the continent, and was one of only a few survivors on this trip, returning as a guide some years later.



A Muslim slave, Estevanico travelled for an entire decade

Ferdinand Magellan

PORTUGUESE 1480-1521

Ferdinand Magellan had a dream: to visit the Indonesian Maluku Islands. He set off with five ships and over 200 men, heading west via South America. Unaware how vast the Pacific was, they faced great challenges and many died. The remaining crew reached the islands, where Magellan was killed by natives, and only one ship made it back to Spain. Although Magellan died, he led the expedition, so is credited with the first round-the-world voyage.

> "This is one small step for (a) man, one giant leap for mankind"
>
> *Neil Armstrong*

NEIL ARMSTRONG

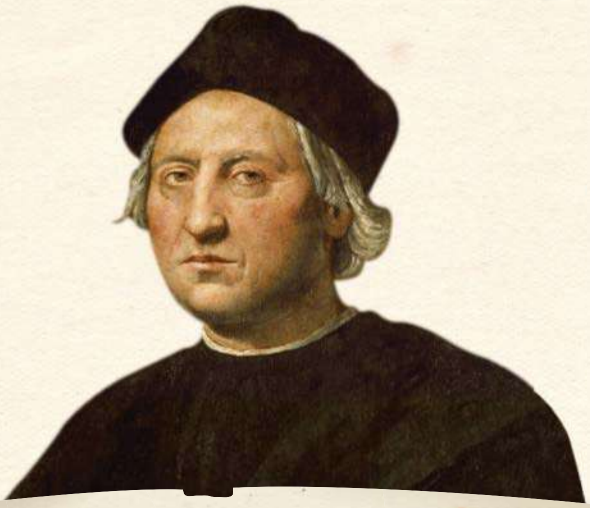
AMERICAN 1930-2012

For some, land exploration just isn't enough. After serving as a US Navy pilot in the Korean War and becoming a test pilot, Neil Armstrong joined NASA in 1962, later becoming the organisation's first civilian astronaut to fly in space in 1966. As if this great achievement wasn't enough, in 1969 he went on to become the first person to walk on the Moon during Apollo 11.

NASA
ARMSTRONG

© Look and Learn; Corbis; Getty

"He secured the patronage of the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile who agreed to fund his plans to explore the New World"



COLUMBUS

EXPLORER · ICON · MURDERER

Christopher Columbus was instrumental in defining the New World, but did he rule his new-found lands with a brutal and bloody iron fist?

Written by Dom Reseigh-Lincoln

The son of middle-class Genoan wool weavers, Christopher Columbus is not your usual child. Driven and incessantly inquisitive, the young boy is fascinated with the maps and charts the traders and seafarers bring to his coastal home in Italy. Something about those empty spaces on the intricately marked canvas calls to him, a fantastical need to fill those gaps and claim the glory such discoveries would surely bring. The unknown doesn't unsettle him, like it does many people of the time – in fact, it does the opposite: it captivates him. Seeing a rare tenacity in his eldest son, his father spends what money a wool weaver can spare and secures a place for Columbus at the University of Pavia. There he studies grammar, geography, geometry, astronomy, navigation and Latin – but for all his studies, the young Genoan finds his mind drifting to those blanks voids on the map. This hunger would define his life forever.

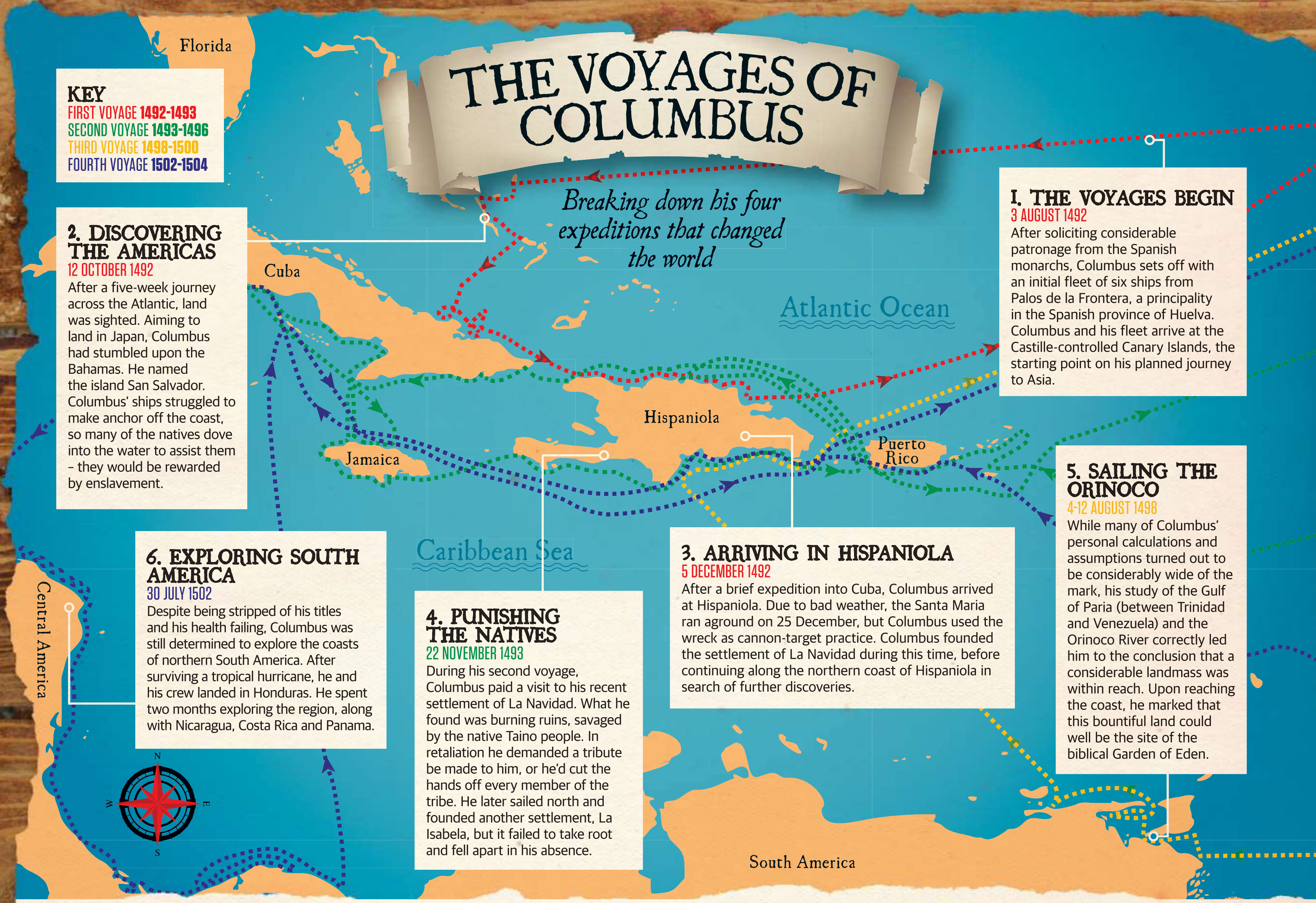
In 1470, Columbus gains an apprenticeship working as a business agent for three influential Genoan families. His learned background and tenacity in the face of adversity makes him a ferocious businessman and he's soon captaining ships that carve the ocean like blades. His work takes him far and wide across the civilised world: Lisbon, Bristol, Galway, West Africa and even settlements in Iceland become common ports of call. While deeply pious, Columbus steadily builds a reputation for ruthless determination. But for all his years of trade and commerce in these establishment lands, Columbus would always find his mind drifting to those incomplete maps he pored over as a child. The only thing standing between him and those fabled lands of untold riches was money. It was time to find a patron – an incredibly wealthy patron.

For many years, Europe held a distant yet lucrative trade relationship with the East. While under the rule of the once-rampant Mongol Empire, European traders travelled a relatively safe route of passage to China known as the Silk Road, but now that Constantinople had fallen to the Turks, the route was rife with piracy. The East was now too dangerous a path to take, even for the most hardened of captains. Columbus was searching for a new route to India and the riches of Asia and to achieve this his plan was simple: sail west across the Ocean Sea (the 15th and 16th-century name for the Atlantic Ocean).

Sailing west wasn't just a case of turning your ships about and sailing away from the Orient, though. Since a portion of the map remained undefined on Western charts, the view of scholars, geographers and seafarers was a skewed one. Theories that the Earth was a flat disc persisted among some, but it was more the misinterpretations and speculation involving the distances between Europe and Asia, as well as the actual size of the mysterious continents and islands that were rumoured to lie beyond the storm-ridden oceans. Even Columbus' own theories were wildly inaccurate, but his intensity and sheer persistence made him stand out from his peers. He eventually secured the patronage of the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, who agree to fund his plans to explore the New World and claim it the name of a unified, Catholic Spain.

THE VOYAGES OF COLUMBUS

Breaking down his four expeditions that changed the world



KEY
FIRST VOYAGE 1492-1493
SECOND VOYAGE 1493-1496
THIRD VOYAGE 1498-1500
FOURTH VOYAGE 1502-1504

1. THE VOYAGES BEGIN

3 AUGUST 1492

After soliciting considerable patronage from the Spanish monarchs, Columbus sets off with an initial fleet of six ships from Palos de la Frontera, a principality in the Spanish province of Huelva. Columbus and his fleet arrive at the Castille-controlled Canary Islands, the starting point on his planned journey to Asia.

2. DISCOVERING THE AMERICAS

12 OCTOBER 1492

After a five-week journey across the Atlantic, land was sighted. Aiming to land in Japan, Columbus had stumbled upon the Bahamas. He named the island San Salvador. Columbus' ships struggled to make anchor off the coast, so many of the natives dove into the water to assist them – they would be rewarded by enslavement.

3. ARRIVING IN HISPANIOLA

5 DECEMBER 1492

After a brief expedition into Cuba, Columbus arrived at Hispaniola. Due to bad weather, the Santa Maria ran aground on 25 December, but Columbus used the wreck as cannon-target practice. Columbus founded the settlement of La Navidad during this time, before continuing along the northern coast of Hispaniola in search of further discoveries.

4. PUNISHING THE NATIVES

22 NOVEMBER 1493

During his second voyage, Columbus paid a visit to his recent settlement of La Navidad. What he found was burning ruins, savaged by the native Taino people. In retaliation he demanded a tribute be made to him, or he'd cut the hands off every member of the tribe. He later sailed north and founded another settlement, La Isabela, but it failed to take root and fell apart in his absence.

5. SAILING THE ORINOCO

4-12 AUGUST 1498

While many of Columbus' personal calculations and assumptions turned out to be considerably wide of the mark, his study of the Gulf of Paria (between Trinidad and Venezuela) and the Orinoco River correctly led him to the conclusion that a considerable landmass was within reach. Upon reaching the coast, he marked that this bountiful land could well be the site of the biblical Garden of Eden.

6. EXPLORING SOUTH AMERICA

30 JULY 1502

Despite being stripped of his titles and his health failing, Columbus was still determined to explore the coasts of northern South America. After surviving a tropical hurricane, he and his crew landed in Honduras. He spent two months exploring the region, along with Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama.

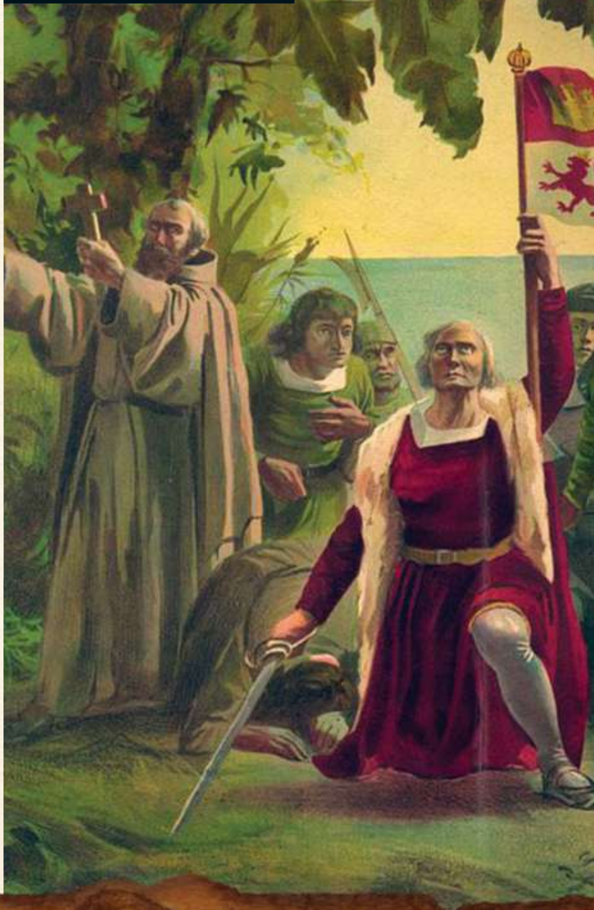
On the morning of 3 August 1492, with a contingent of three ships and two smaller caravels, Columbus sets sail from Palos de la Frontera. The swells are relatively calm and the ships carve a path toward the Canary Islands in a few days, before restocking supplies and setting sail for Japan. The three ships sail deeper into the unknown. Violent winds and angry swells buffet them across the waves, their intended course ripped apart by tropical storms these westbound seafarers have little experience with. By 12 October, morale on the ships is at a dangerously low - men have drowned in storms, masts have been broken by vicious gales and even a small mutiny breaks out. Columbus, sat within the confines of his cabin, stares at the maps before him. He knows their course has been broken, but it's the time at sea that troubles him the most. They should have set foot on new lands long before now. Time is running out.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, one of sailors above screams at the top of his voice: "Land! Land ahoy!" Columbus rushes from his desk, candles, papers and wine flying in his wake. The spray of the swaying oceans stings him in the face after so many hours in a stuffy cabin, but he's soon scrambling onto the poop deck, the prospect of land driving him forward. Telescope in hand, he squints and takes his first glimpse of a brand new world. Lush greenery and a pale-coloured beach can be seen in the distance, birds of a peculiar colour circling above the canopy. It's then that he sees them: dark-skinned men and women, most of them barely dressed at all, spears and bows clutched in their hands.

A few hours later, all three ships are anchored at a safe distance and the three crews are now safely on land. Columbus is standing upon Watling Island (which would later form part of the Bahamas). He names it San Salvador and claims it for the glory of Spain. Over the next few days, Columbus meets with the three main tribes of the island - the Taino, the Arawak and the Lucayan - and begins building a relationship that tells him a great deal about this new Eden. Only one other tribe, based on a distant island, is aggressive toward them, occasionally landing raiding parties to take slaves. In one of his journal entries, Columbus remarks: "I could conquer the whole of them with 50 men, and govern them as I please." Columbus views them less as people and more as another acquisition with which he can return to Spain. While this attitude may seem callous, it is a common one that will eventually drive and maintain the slave trade for hundreds of years to come. After a week or more on San Salvador, he begins searching the surrounding waters, eventually arriving on the northern coast of Cuba, before landing on the cost of Hispaniola on 5 December 1492.

Hispaniola is a much larger land mass than the first island he embarked on, and with a calm

A highly stylised depiction of Columbus' first landing in America in 1492



sea behind him and stories of a realm rich with gold and other treasures, Columbus is confident he's found the beginning of his own legacy. In a matter of weeks he establishes a settlement on the island, La Navidad, and on 25 December orders a specially chosen crew of his most trusted seafarers to take the Santa Maria and sail north and conduct more reconnaissance. Unfortunately, Columbus is drunk at the time he gives the orders, as is the crew he appoints. In a matter of a few hours, half the crew fall asleep and the boat crashes into the rocks.

On 13 January 1493, Columbus meets with the carique (the head chieftain of the Taino peoples) of Hispaniola, Guacanagari, who agrees to the explorer's request to leave 39 of his crew behind to populate the settlement. He leaves on the last exploratory part of his first voyage and arrives some days later on the Samana Peninsula, where he encounters the far less friendly Ciguayos tribe. The carique on the island refuses to grant Columbus leave to establish a settlement; battle soon ensues and two of the tribe's people are killed. As punishment, Columbus captures 30 of their people and sets sail for Spain – only seven of the captives survive the long trip back to Europe.

> "La Navidad has been razed to the ground, burned to a cinder by the Taino people that had been so accommodating the year before"

Upon returning to the court of the Spanish monarchs, Columbus becomes the talk of Europe with his journals, maps, fruits, spices, gold and native captives. His irrefutable proof of a new land between Europe and Asia now laid before them, Isabella and Ferdinand happily award Columbus the titles previously agreed, and he becomes the Admiral of the Open Sea and viceroy and governor of all the lands he discovers. In order to ensure the expansion of Hispaniola, Columbus sends his brother Bartolomeo along with a consignment of sailors, soldiers and tradesmen soon after.

On 24 September, Columbus sets out on his second major voyage. It's an expedition that takes a far more southerly route, taking in the other islands in the Bahamas, as well as a stopover in Jamaica. On 22 November, Columbus and his fleet of 17 ships turn their bows toward Hispaniola, the Genoan governor ready to see the plans he gave his brother back in Cadiz come to life. What he finds is a burning ruin. La Navidad has been razed, burned to a cinder by the Taino people that had been so accommodating the year before. He had brought civility to their darkened corner of the Earth. He had given them stability. He had given them the power of Christ.

LIFE ON THE WAVES

What was the reality of sailing the oceans in the 15th century?

Ship's surgeon

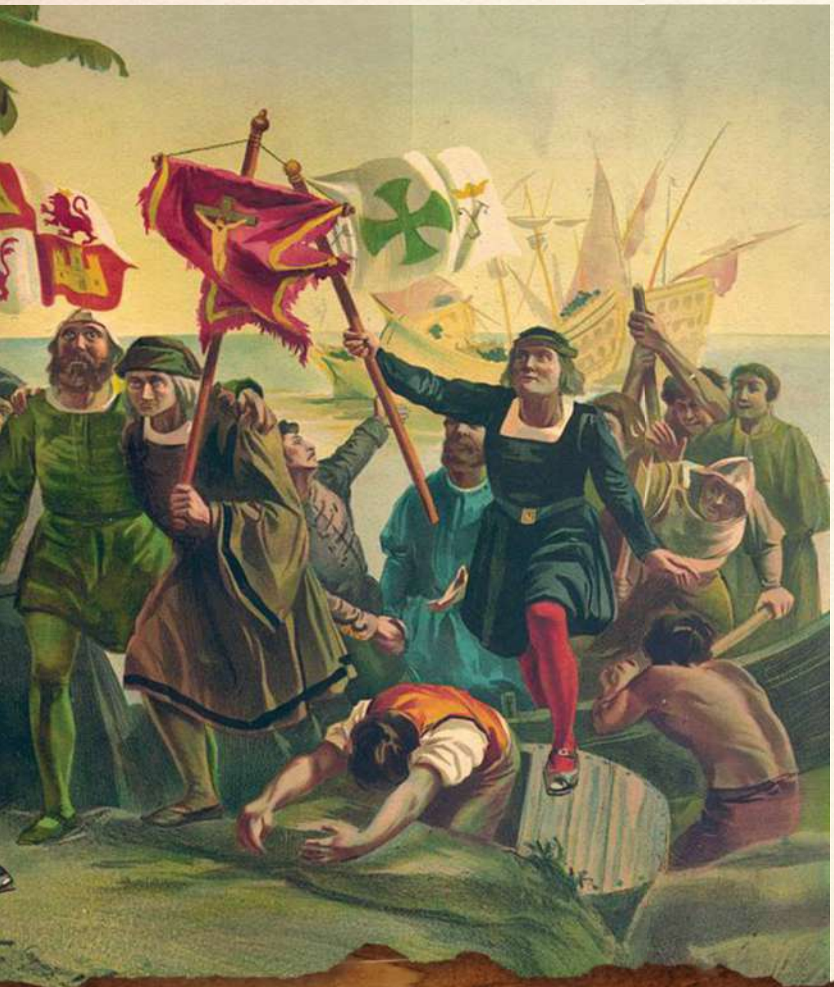
Life aboard a 150-tonne ship was fraught with dangers. Cannons could misfire, limbs could be broken by broken masts and flailing rigging, as well as the various diseases and ailments that could affect the crew. At the heart of all this was the ship's surgeon, whose role was to ensure a crew remained fit enough to fulfil their duties, however gruesome the treatment.

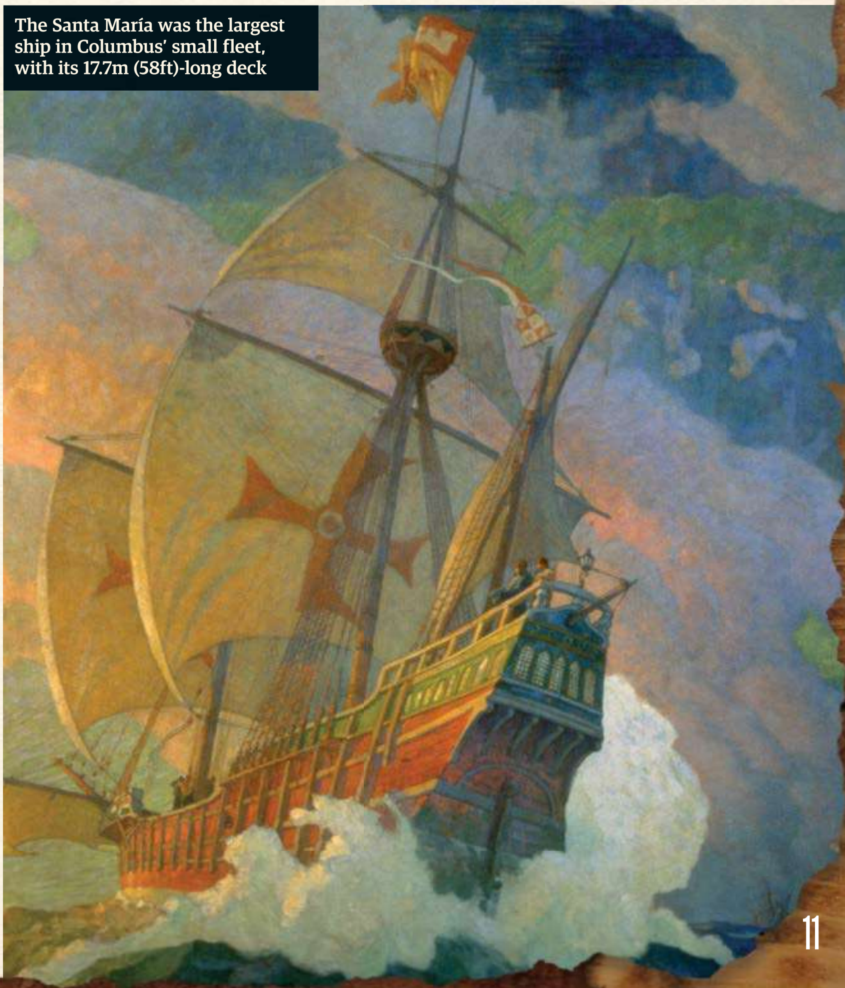
Boatswain

The boatswain was one of the most important members of a ship, and with that responsibility came its fair share of danger. A boatswain, usually the third or fourth mate, was in charge of maintaining the ship's deck and ensuring the sails and rigging remained in the best condition. In moments of emergency, such as a raging fire (a common occurrence due to power kegs overheating in hot, dry temperatures) and storms, a boatswain would be first on the scene.

Ordinary seaman

For all the master gunners and quartermasters, there was always need for seamen willing to do the hard graft that life at sea demanded. Known rather less affectionately to their fellow crew as 'swabbers', ordinary seamen found themselves doing the Santa Maria's worst jobs. Pumping and removing bilge (the stagnant water that collects in the lowest compartment of a ship), untangling knotted rigging and swabbing the decks clean were just some of their chores.





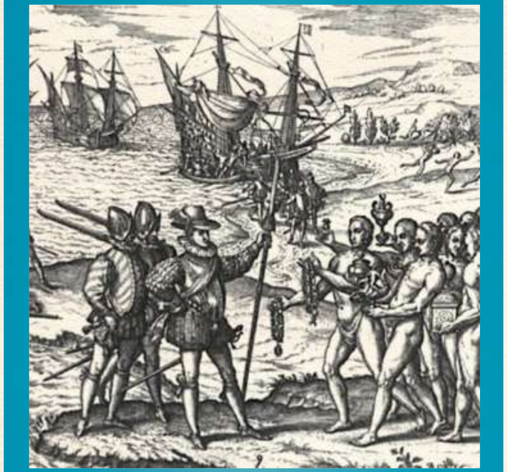
The Santa María was the largest ship in Columbus' small fleet, with its 17.7m (58ft)-long deck

CUTTHROAT COLUMBUS

Three of the legendary explorer's most brutal actions

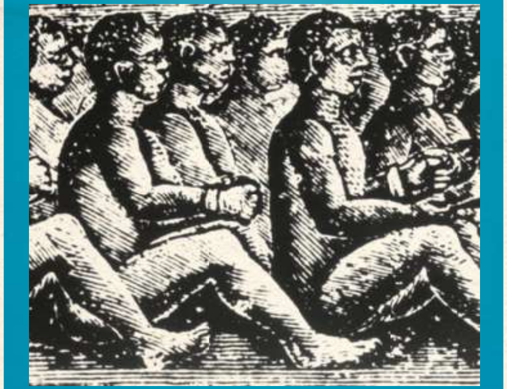
Public humiliation

Columbus and his like-minded brothers, Bartolomeo and Diego, were known for their psychological as well as physical torture. "Columbus' government was characterised by a form of tyranny", says Spanish historian Consuelo Varela. One such case involved a woman who dared to suggest Columbus was of lowly birth. Columbus' brother Bartolomeo had her stripped naked and paraded through the colony on the back of a mule. "Bartolomeo ordered that her tongue be cut out", adds Ms Varela. "Christopher congratulated him for defending the family."



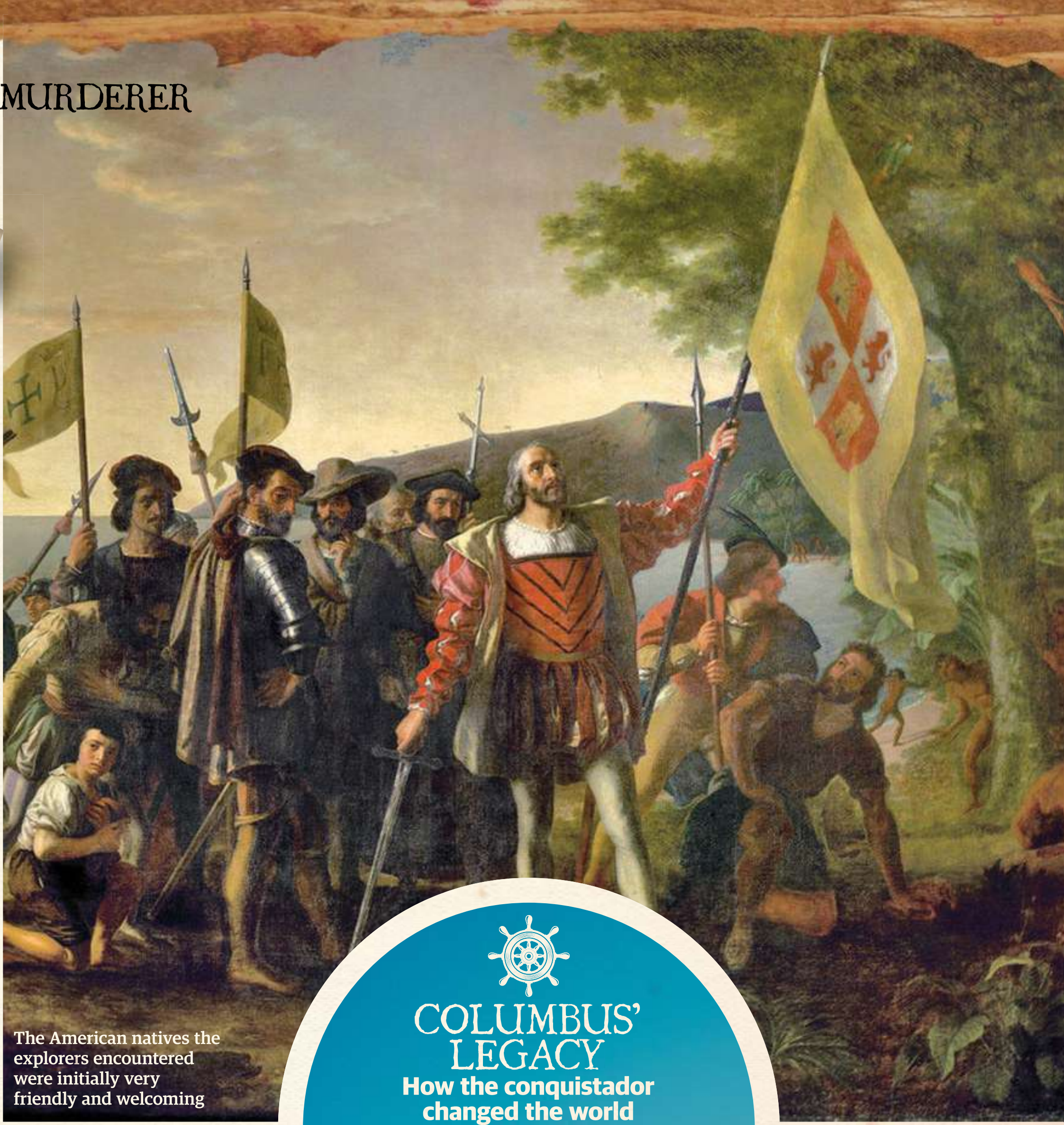
Worked into the ground

When Columbus arrived in the Bahamas in 1492, he discovered a number of peaceful native peoples, most notably the Taino tribe. Columbus himself remarked on how friendly these dark-skinned natives were – they carried few weapons either, since their society bred few if any criminals. He also discovered rich deposits of gold, so he claimed the land in the name of the Spanish Crown and enslaved that very tribe. Within two years, 125,000 – half the population – had died from working in Columbus' mines.



Slavery and mutilation

Columbus was a troubled man, paranoid and deeply suspicious, especially in his later years. According to one report, a man caught stealing corn had his ears and nose cut off at Columbus' request, before being sold into slavery. Enforced servitude became a common course of action for Columbus and his law-enforcing brothers. Columbus himself personally oversaw a sickening trade in sexual slavery, selling young Indian girls and women into a life of brutal prostitution.

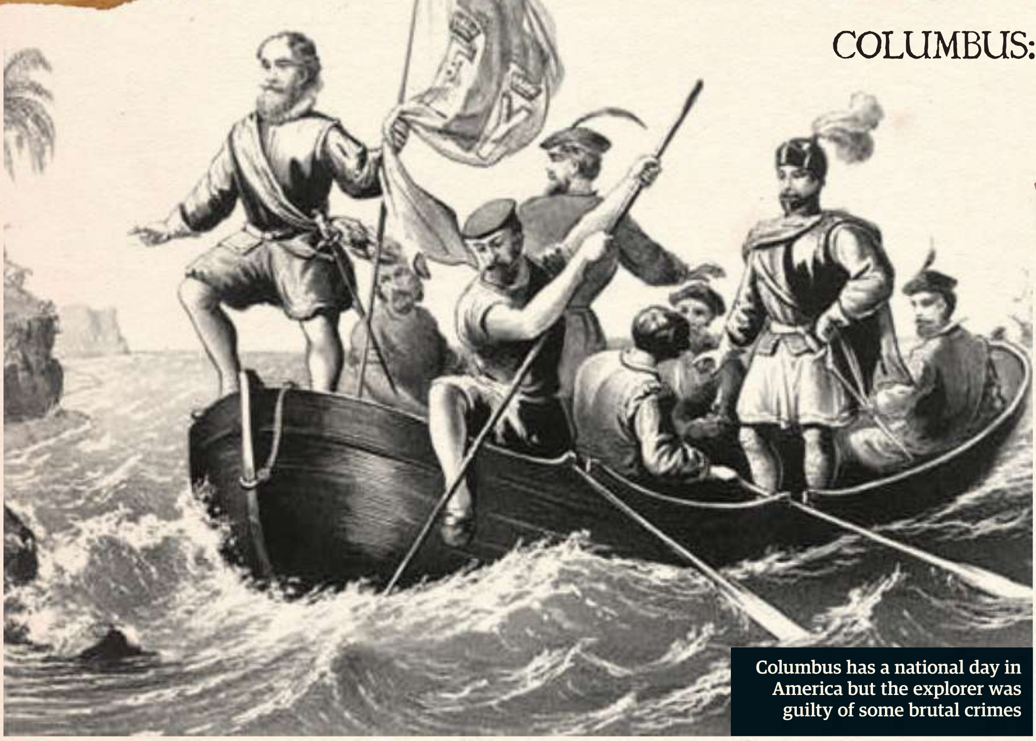


The American natives the explorers encountered were initially very friendly and welcoming

COLUMBUS' LEGACY

How the conquistador changed the world

Columbus wasn't the first European to reach North America, but his mark on the world is clear. To quote historian Martin Dugard: "Columbus' claim to fame isn't that he got there first – it's that he stayed." Unlike the small settlements the Vikings created 500 years earlier, Columbus claimed the lands he found in the name of Spain and created significant communities that continued to expand from the coast.



Columbus has a national day in America but the explorer was guilty of some brutal crimes

They had repaid him with a ruined settlement and countless butchered Spaniards.

In Columbus' absence, but very much following his direct orders, Hispaniola had quickly become a far-different place than the one they arrived at. The abundant and peaceful tribes of the island were happy to share the locations of the gold-rich valleys with their foreign guests, but they were less prepared for what came next. Bartolomeo Columbus forced thousands of the natives into slavery, making them dig mines into the mountains, scouring it for precious metals. Hundreds of Europeans brought with them a great number of Western diseases, and such viruses spread through the unprepared natives like wildfire. Such conditions had led the Taino people to lead a rebellion against the foreign invaders, but their actions only galvanised Columbus' own desire for order and retribution.

> "Columbus' seven-year rule had enslaved a majority of the island's native inhabitants, which had reduced a population of a few million to around 60,000 by 1500"

With his brothers at his side and his Spanish patrons none the wiser, Columbus carved untold riches from the heart of the land. Such riches kept the Spanish monarchs happy, but rumours of brutality would soon spill out across the waves, with reports that Columbus' governorship had sent him mad with power. While reports of his brutality were true, they were seized upon with gusto by the many enemies he had made at the Spanish court, who were jealous of the riches he was making. It is likely his Spanish patrons did indeed have some idea to the lengths Columbus was willing to go to seek his fortune in the New World. However brutal he might have been, his efforts were still filling the coffers of the Spanish crown at a time where war had drunk them dry.

Columbus would conduct a third voyage before Ferdinand and Isabella were forced to send an emissary to investigate the claims that hung thickly over the Spanish court. After receiving the report, they stripped Columbus of his titles and sent the administrator Francisco de Bobadilla to further investigate and govern in his stead. When Bobadilla arrived in August 1500, the land he found was certainly a startling one. Columbus' seven-year rule of the island had enslaved a majority of the island's native inhabitants, which had reduced a population of a few million free people to around 60,000 by 1500. He hears reports of Columbus selling young girls into sexual slavery and complaints that Columbus and his brothers would mutilate and humiliate anyone who stood in their way. The man who now has his own national holiday in the United States was eventually sent back to Spain in disgrace, but the Spanish monarchs did not imprison or hang him; stripping him of their patronage and his titles had nearly broken an already sick and ailing man.

Columbus' legacy is defined by his passion for discovery, but some modern accounts are perhaps quick to forget he was a conquistador by name and by nature. Driven by a desire to chart and define the New World, Columbus had not only discovered new lands, he had helped establish a Western footing that would continue to expand for hundreds of years. In his later years he wrote: "By prevailing over all obstacles and distractions, one may unfailingly arrive at his chosen goal or destination." While his actions will always have a shadow over them, his life-long desire to banish the unknown will ensure his name lives on forever.

THE VOYAGES IN NUMBERS

The shocking stats behind Columbus' conquistador career

3,700KM

The distance between the Canary Islands and Japan, according to Columbus' calculations

17

The number of ships, made up mostly of durable, long-distance-ready carrack-style vessels, Columbus used in his second voyage in 1493

19,600KM

The actual distance between the Canary Islands and Japan. Despite the advice of cartographers and geographers, Columbus would not be swayed on his own estimates

11

Number of combined years Columbus spent exploring, with his four main voyages for the mighty Spanish Crown

1,500

The total number of colonists (mainly Spanish, Portuguese and Italian) that Columbus drafted for his first-ever voyage across the Atlantic Ocean

29

During his third voyage in 1502, Columbus lost 29 of the 30 ships he set sail with, after getting caught in a violent storm off the coast of Santo Domingo

10 EXPLORERS WHO HELPED DISCOVER THE AMERICAS

John Cabot

ITALIAN 1450-1499

Exploring the New World in the name of the Tudors

Explored: Newfoundland
Also: Nova Scotia (Canada); Maine (United States)

John Cabot is believed by many historians to be the first European to set foot in North America since the Vikings established Vinland in the 11th century. Under the patronage of King Henry VII of England, Cabot touched down in Newfoundland, Maine and Nova Scotia. Unfortunately, Cabot was neither the sailor nor the captain that Columbus was and his voyages have largely been forgotten.

William Clark

AMERICAN 1770-1838

The man who co-charted and co-claimed the Pacific Northwest

Explored: Oregon
Also: Kansas City, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota

Politician. Soldier. Governor. Explorer. William Clark remains one of the most influential men to ever chart his own country. At the beginning of the 19th century, North America was divided between the United States, Spain and France. Following the purchase of Louisiana from the French in 1803, Clark, alongside explorer Merriweather Lewis, led a two-year expedition that mapped a practical route through the wilds of the northern states.

> "Elizabeth granted Raleigh a patent to explore the New World"

Henry Hudson

ENGLISH 1560s-UNKNOWN

A China-bound seafarer who stumbled upon New York

Explored: New York (United States)
Also: Newfoundland, Nova Scotia (Canada);

While the particulars of Hudson's personal life remain speculative, his actions as an explorer helped change European understanding of the New World's geographical layout. While attempting to create a direct route to Cathay (the medieval name for China), Hudson accidently discovered what would become New York. In fact, Hudson's mapping of the region was so integral that a river was renamed in his honour.

Leifur Eiriksson

ICELANDIC CA 970 - CA 1020

500 years before Columbus, a Viking discovered the New World

Explored: Vinland (modern-day Newfoundland)

Viking explorer Leifur Eiriksson's travels across the oceans from Scandinavia helped establish a stronghold in Vinland (the Old Norse name for North America). While Icelandic records like the *Saga Of The Greenlanders* point out Leifur wasn't the first Norseman to place a leathered sole on American soil, he galvanised Viking activity in Vinland. Although he died almost a thousand years ago, the fabled Norse explorer left a mark on Scandinavia and North America that still remains. Visitors to St Paul, Minnesota, will see a bronze statue of Leifur standing proudly near the Minnesota State Capitol, with his image symbolising the migration of Nordic people to America.

THE *WORST* EXPEDITIONS REVEALED

Some voyages into the unknown are famous for all the wrong reasons…

600 Spaniards die in the Gulf of Mexico

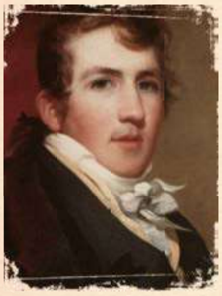
In 1527, the Spanish Crown sent a fleet to conquer and colonise Florida and the Gold Coast. A mutiny reduced the fleet at the Dominican Republic, while a hurricane drowned hundreds of Spanish sailors. The remaining survivors washed up on the coast of Florida, but many died at the hands of native tribesmen. Of the 600-strong crew, only four returned to Spain in 1528.

Magellan falls foul of the elements

Famous for almost circumventing the globe in the 16th century, Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan miscalculated the size of the Pacific Ocean on a voyage to Asia. Most of his 270-strong crew died of thirst and hunger long before they made landfall on Guam. Those who didn't perish died at the hands of Filipino natives, including Magellan himself.

A fatal race to the South Pole

In 1911, a group of explorers lead by Captain Robert Scott attempted to be the first people to reach the South Pole, but they were beaten in their quest by a Norwegian team led by Roald Amundsen. These five men – Scott, Wilson, Oates, Bowers and Evans – paid the highest price and died. Scott has since been blamed for poor planning but bad luck also played its part as well.



Robert Gray

AMERICAN 1755-1806

A captain who lost an eye, but gained an extraordinary legacy

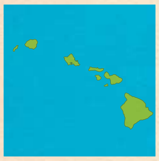
Explored: California (United States)
Also: British Columbia (Canada); Washington, Oregon.

A merchant sea captain, Gray pioneered the maritime fur trade on the Northern Pacific coast of his home nation, discovering more regions as he pushed trade further up and down that side of the country. He's most famously credited with the first American circumnavigation of the globe, as well as the travelling on and naming of the Columbia River in 1792. To this day, many geographic features in Washington and Oregon bear his name to mark his historical legacy.

James Cook

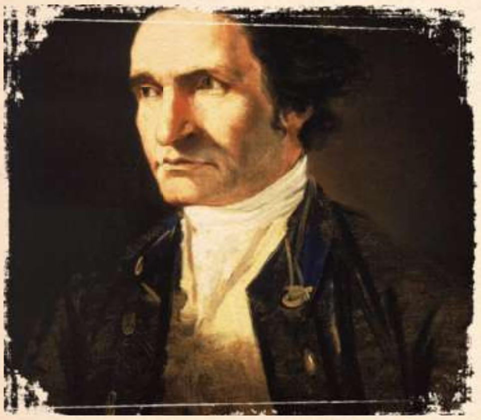
BRITISH 7 NOV 1728 - 14 FEB 1779

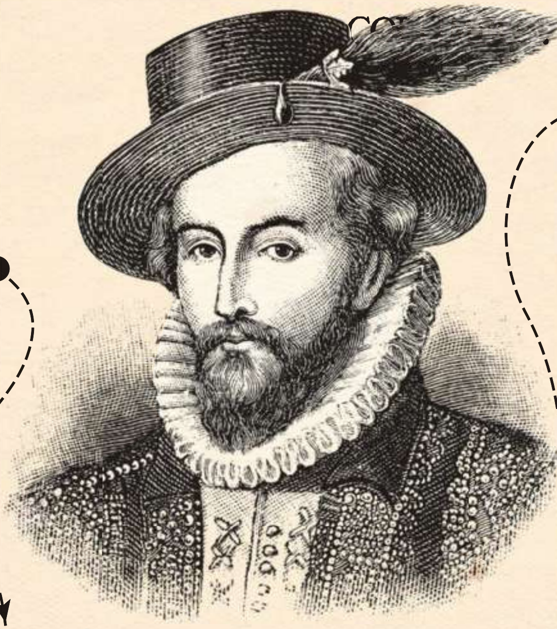
A military man turned explorer who met his end in the new worlds he discovered



Explored: Hawaii
Also: Saint Lawrence River (Canada/United States).

Much like Columbus and Marco Polo, captain James Cook's name is synonymous with early exploration. He began his career as a teenager when he joined the Merchant Navy, seeing action in many naval clashes of the Seven Years War. Cook then used his experiencing charting the Saint Lawrence River during the Siege of Quebec to gain the command of three expeditions around the world. Cook's travels also brought him to the island of Hawaii, where his expert cartography skills enabled him to chart the islands with a detail unrivalled by his peers. He died during a clash with native Hawaiians during this third major voyage in 1779.





Sir Walter Raleigh

ENGLISH 1554-1618

Poet, soldier, courtier, spy, explorer

Explored: North Carolina, South Carolina
Also: Georgia, Florida (United States)

Perhaps one of the most famous explorers save Columbus himself, Sir Walter Raleigh gained favour in the court of Elizabeth I, with his many fabled bounties of treasure and exotic items typifying the Golden Age of the monarch's reign. Following years of war with France and Spain, English merchants were now pushing farther afield into Asia, Africa and the New World. As well as being famous for his pursuit of El Dorado (the City of Gold), Raleigh was instrumental in the English colonisation of North America. In the late-1580s, Elizabeth granted Raleigh a royal patent to explore the New World in the name of the English Crown.

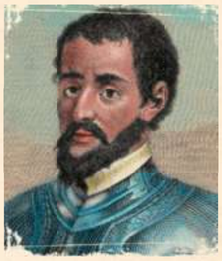
Claude-Jean Allouez

FRENCH 1622-1689

A passionate zealot who explored the New World

Explored: Wisconsin
Also: Michigan, Indiana (United States)

Born in France, Allouez was a Jesuit missionary who travelled to Canada in order to help solidify a series of missions in the region. As part of his religious journey, Allouez regularly came into contact with members of native tribes, which eventually led him south into the future United States. His initial work setting up a number of missions in Wisconsin also coincided with his travels down the Mississippi River. His extensive and detailed notes of the areas he explored helped the French crown to later claim the Great Lakes for themselves.



Hernando de Soto

SPANISH, 1497-1542

This conquistador plundered the South for riches

Explored: Florida
Also: Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas (United States)

Much like English seafarer Henry Hudson, the Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto initially stumbled upon North America while sailing for China. He had set voyage for the East in search of treasure for the financially precarious Spanish Crown, but instead found a land rich with gold and silver deposits, lush and untamed. While he is most famous for having the first documented crossing of the Mississippi River by a foreigner, his expeditions took him to Oklahoma, Georgia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

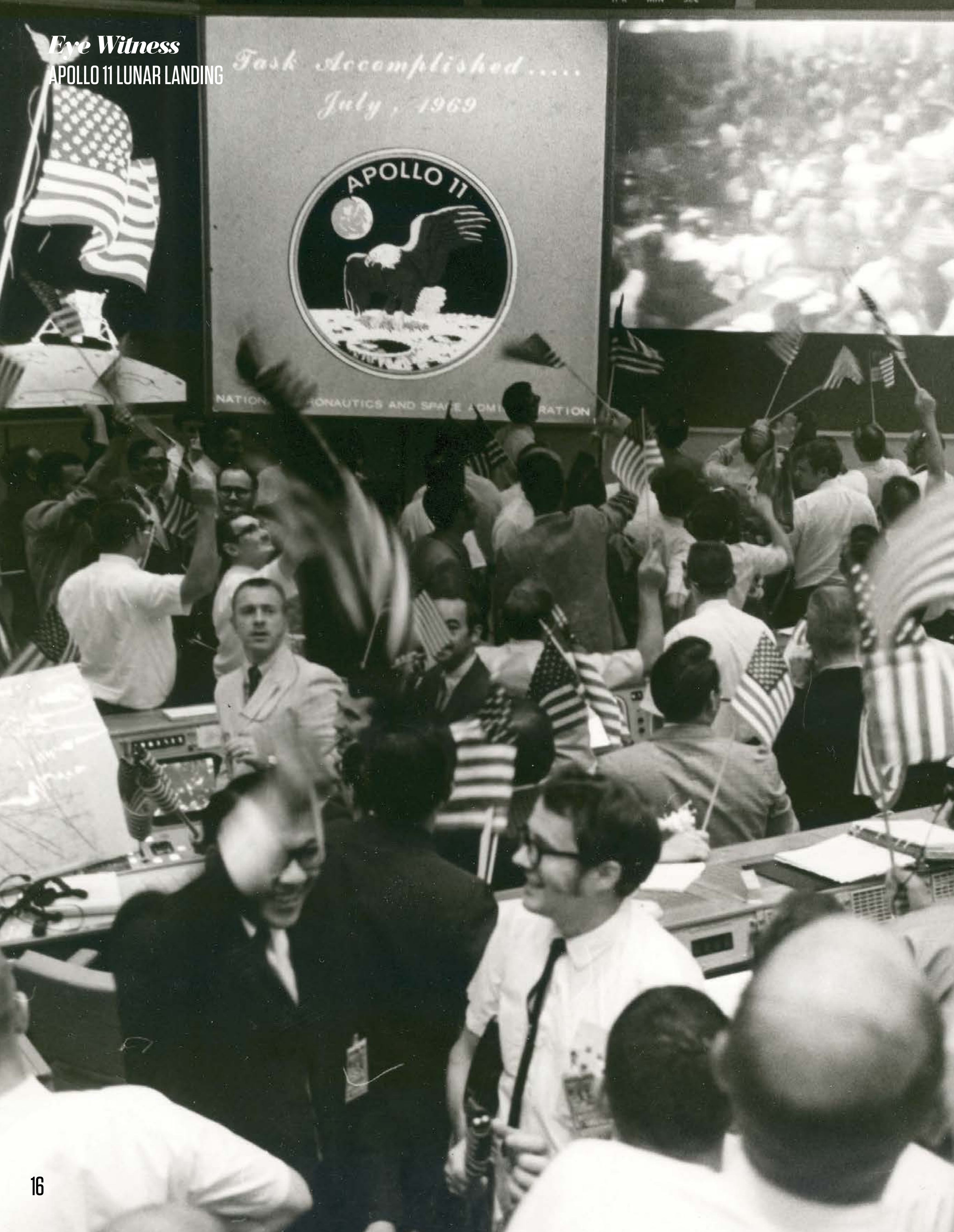
David Thompson

BRITISH-CANADIAN 1770-1857

The "greatest land geographer that ever lived"

Explored: Nevada
Also: British Columbia, Alberta (Canada); Oregon, Montana, Wyoming.

The Westminster-born Thompson headed south from Canada into the wilderness of North America and began uncovering its secrets. Over a career that lasted most of his life, Thompson managed to map a staggering 3.9 million square kilometres (1.5 million square miles) of topography across the Frontier. He started his project around 1793 with his expeditions into the Rocky Mountains, before creating a detailed map of trading posts across the region, including Montana and Idaho. Among other things, the explorer has a highway named after him in Canada.


Task Accomplished.....
July, 1969
APOLLO 11
NATION
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Eye Witness

APOLLO 11 LUNAR LANDING, THE MOON, 20 JULY 1969

Written by Jonathan O'Callaghan

JACK GARMAN

John R 'Jack' Garman is a computer engineer who worked at NASA from 1966 to 2000. In 1969 he was a key figure in the Apollo 11 lunar landing, responsible for overseeing the primitive computer onboard the spacecraft. Now retired, Garman had a long and fruitful career at NASA, although perhaps no mission was as important as Apollo 11.

> “It was a very euphoric kind of atmosphere; by jove, we actually did it, they actually landed on the Moon”

At 8.18pm (GMT) on 20 July 1969, Americans Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to land on the Moon. It is arguably mankind's greatest accomplishment to date, but over 380,000 kilometres (240,000 miles) away, those people in NASA's Mission Control Center at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, were celebrating out of relief as much as joy, having just overcome one of the most difficult and technical missions in human history. Inside Mission Control, computer engineer Jack Garman was at the heart of the celebrations, having just saved the mission from disaster minutes prior to the landing.

At the time of the Apollo 11 landing, Garman was very young in comparison to his colleagues. He'd joined NASA as a fresh-faced 21-year-old in 1966, straight out of college. Within just three years he had acclimatised himself with the workings of the computer that would power and control the Apollo 11 spacecraft, and on the day of the landing was tasked with watching over those computers to ensure the landing went without a hitch. These computers were rudimentary at best in nature, though and not easy to operate.

“It was strange, different, to have a system, a vehicle, that was run by computer. I mean, today even our cars are run by computers, but back then almost all the systems were analogue,” explains Garman as he tells us about his work in Mission Control: “They wanted a so-called expert in the control centre, so they gave me a council in the Apollo Guidance Computer support room and that's where I spent a lot of time during most of the flights to the Moon.”

On the day of the landing, Mission Control was bustling and buzzing with hundreds of people: “During the landing itself I remember that when they got near the lunar surface, Buzz Aldrin made a call-out saying [softly]: ‘We've got dust now,’” Garman tells us. “The descent engine was firing up dust from the lunar surface. With all the simulations we'd been through it was kind of like a script, but he'd never made that call before! He didn't follow the script! That was an awakening. I mean, you knew it was real, but still, wow! This is it, they're about to land.”

It turns out though, that as they were preparing to land, unbeknownst to the astronauts, Garman had performed some vital preparations that would ensure the mission could continue and history would be made that night. Garman and his team were responsible for ensuring they could overcome any programme alarm that might be thrown up by the primitive computer, but one alarm still seemingly stumped some of the brightest minds ever assembled.

During one simulation prior to the landing a computer alarm came up, known as a ‘1202 alarm’, which Garman and his team hadn't seen before. His superior at the time, guidance officer Steve Bales, called for an abort. “Afterwards Gene Kranz, who was the flight director for the Apollo 11 landing, boy did he get mad,” explains

How the Moon landing unfolded

GMT

17:44pm **The Lunar Module separates from the Command and Service Module in lunar orbit.**

19:08pm **Moon descent**
Armstrong and Aldrin begin their descent to the lunar surface.

20:04pm **The Lunar Module is now just 15,200m (50,000ft) from the surface.**

20:10pm **The lunar module descends to 9,100m (30,000ft).**

20:14pm **Threat to mission**
The 1202 programme alarm flashes up, but Jack Garman realises it is safe to continue.

20:15pm **Armstrong and Aldrin pick a new landing site having lost track of their location during the alarm.**

Apollo 11 Site

20:16pm **The low-fuel quantity light flashes on, meaning the crew has just seconds' worth of fuel to land the Lunar Module.**

20:16pm **Finally dust is kicked up by the vehicle, meaning the landing is just seconds away.**

20:17pm **Armstrong and Aldrin successfully land on the lunar surface, the first humans to land on another world.**

22:12pm **For the next few hours the crew performs checks on the spacecraft.**

23:43pm **One small step**
Armstrong prepares for the first lunar spacewalk and three hours later he becomes the first human to walk on the Moon. Aldrin follows half an hour later.

NASA Mission Control during the Apollo 11 mission - Jack Garman was regularly in this room during the mission

Garman. "He was all over the simulation guys for putting in a simulation that caused an abort this close to the real flight. And the simulation guys said: 'Uh uh, wrongo bongo fella, you're supposed to recover from this.' After the debriefing, oh boy, did the fur fly."

Kranz told Garman to make sure he knew every possible programme alarm that could come up. So the young computer engineer studied them all and drew himself a cheat sheet he could refer to during the mission. It just so happened that Garman's diligence in doing his homework helped save the mission when it was just minutes away from landing.

During the mission, as Armstrong and Aldrin were descending to the lunar surface, an error reading came up that suggested the on-board computer was running over capacity, the same 1202 alarm that had come up during the simulation. As had been witnessed in the simulation, such a reading was a cause to abort the mission, as Aldrin and Armstrong would not be able to operate the Lunar Module if the computer was not working. Thanks to the flight director's insistence that he brushed up on programming alarms, Garman was the only person in the room who knew this alarm was no reason to abort the mission, and he quickly let his superiors know.

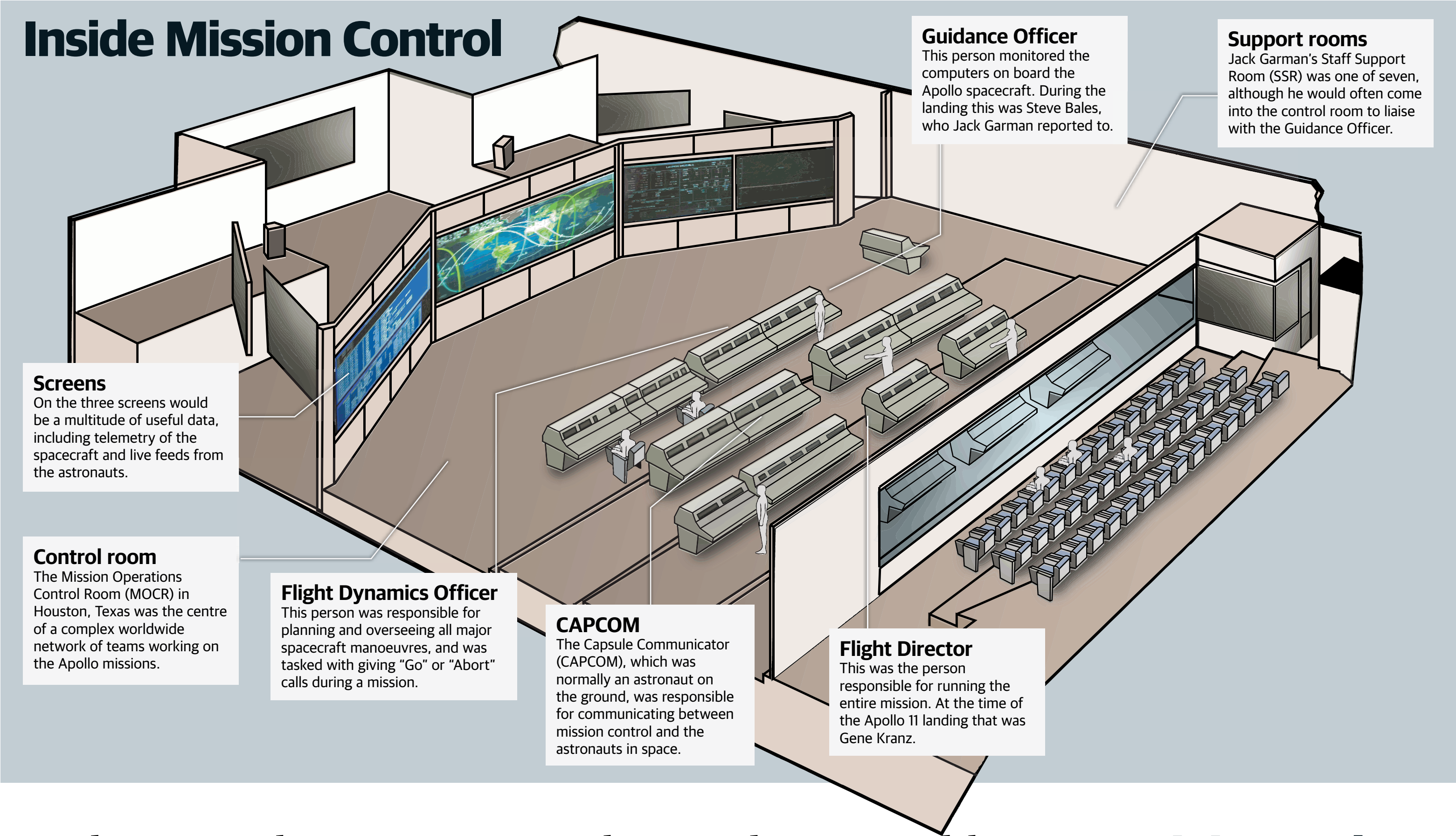
"I looked down at the cheat sheet, saw what [the alarm] was and told them it was okay," says Garman: "As long as there weren't other indications like that the computer was guiding the vehicle to turn upside down or something, we were go. And that's the call they made. Now, to be clear, the speed of light is pretty fast, but it's still a couple of seconds when you're going from the Moon to Earth, and that's the same rate at which voice or radio transmission goes. So when the alarm happened we didn't hear Buzz Aldrin asking what it was for several seconds. And then take a few seconds to give a response and give it back to them, then for the CAPCOM [Capsule Communicator] to call up and say they were go, then add the reaction time for human beings, it was probably [in total] 19 or 20 seconds for the crew before they got a response from us, very nerve-racking. We know it's one of the reasons Armstrong lost track of where he was [above the Moon] because he wasn't looking out of the window. They didn't know where they had landed for quite a while after they touched down, probably in a large part due to the disturbing nature of these programme alarms."

Just a few seconds later, though, Apollo 11 did indeed land safely. As Aldrin and Armstrong celebrated, so

The swing arms move away and a plume of flame signals the liftoff of Apollo 11

NASA and Manned Spacecraft Center (MSC) officials celebrate the historic event of man successfully walking on the Moon

Inside Mission Control



Guidance Officer
This person monitored the computers on board the Apollo spacecraft. During the landing this was Steve Bales, who Jack Garman reported to.

Support rooms
Jack Garman's Staff Support Room (SSR) was one of seven, although he would often come into the control room to liaise with the Guidance Officer.

Screens
On the three screens would be a multitude of useful data, including telemetry of the spacecraft and live feeds from the astronauts.

Control room
The Mission Operations Control Room (MOCR) in Houston, Texas was the centre of a complex worldwide network of teams working on the Apollo missions.

Flight Dynamics Officer
This person was responsible for planning and overseeing all major spacecraft manoeuvres, and was tasked with giving "Go" or "Abort" calls during a mission.

CAPCOM
The Capsule Communicator (CAPCOM), which was normally an astronaut on the ground, was responsible for communicating between mission control and the astronauts in space.

Flight Director
This was the person responsible for running the entire mission. At the time of the Apollo 11 landing that was Gene Kranz.

> "As long as there weren't other indications like that the computer was guiding the vehicle to turn upside down or something, we were go"

too did everyone back in Mission Control on Earth. "I remember Kranz had to calm everybody down, get back to your seats, it's time to go through the landing checklist, and get everything safe and get them ready to get out and all that jazz," says Garman. "It was a very, very euphoric kind of atmosphere; by jove, we actually did it, they actually landed on the Moon."

Garman describes the mood in Mission Control at the time of the landing as eerie. "What I mean is it's like being an actor in a play," he explains. "You go through a lot of rehearsals and dress rehearsals, and then there's actually opening night. When that curtain goes up there's a real audience out there and it's a different feeling. It's eerier. And that's as close as I can get to describing what I mean by eerie. When you have been through the procedures and lots of simulated problems, and you've been through vehicle tests where you're watching the real vehicle on the launchpad and then you actually do it for the first time, and they actually land, you go wow, this is something. That's what I mean by eerie. Not eerie in a sense of unreal, but eerie in the feeling it gave. It was very real, for sure."

It was an incredibly proud achievement for Garman and his colleagues: "I think that any time you can be in a job where you feel like you're higher up on the triangle – and I don't mean that in a superior way – but you're not in a factory building stuff or supplying food, you're not even in education providing teaching, but you may actually be helping to further the knowledge of the human race in some way, you can feel good about that. I certainly did. We certainly did. And to be in that kind of a job and to have the excitement and risk and adventure that goes with it, it's a very self-fulfilling feeling. It was pretty easy to be dedicated and tenacious, spend way too much time at work, that kind of thing. I was very proud to have been part of that, and I was proud to have been part of the on-board computer for the Space Shuttle as well, and for everything else I did for NASA."

For Garman, Apollo 11 was an experience of a lifetime that will remain one of mankind's greatest achievements in the history books. "I doubt that sort of accomplishment will be repeated, at least not in my lifetime. I think apart from putting a human being on Mars or something like that, that's a ways away. Even going back to the Moon or going to an asteroid, even if that happens, it won't be quite the same as the first time. It never is."

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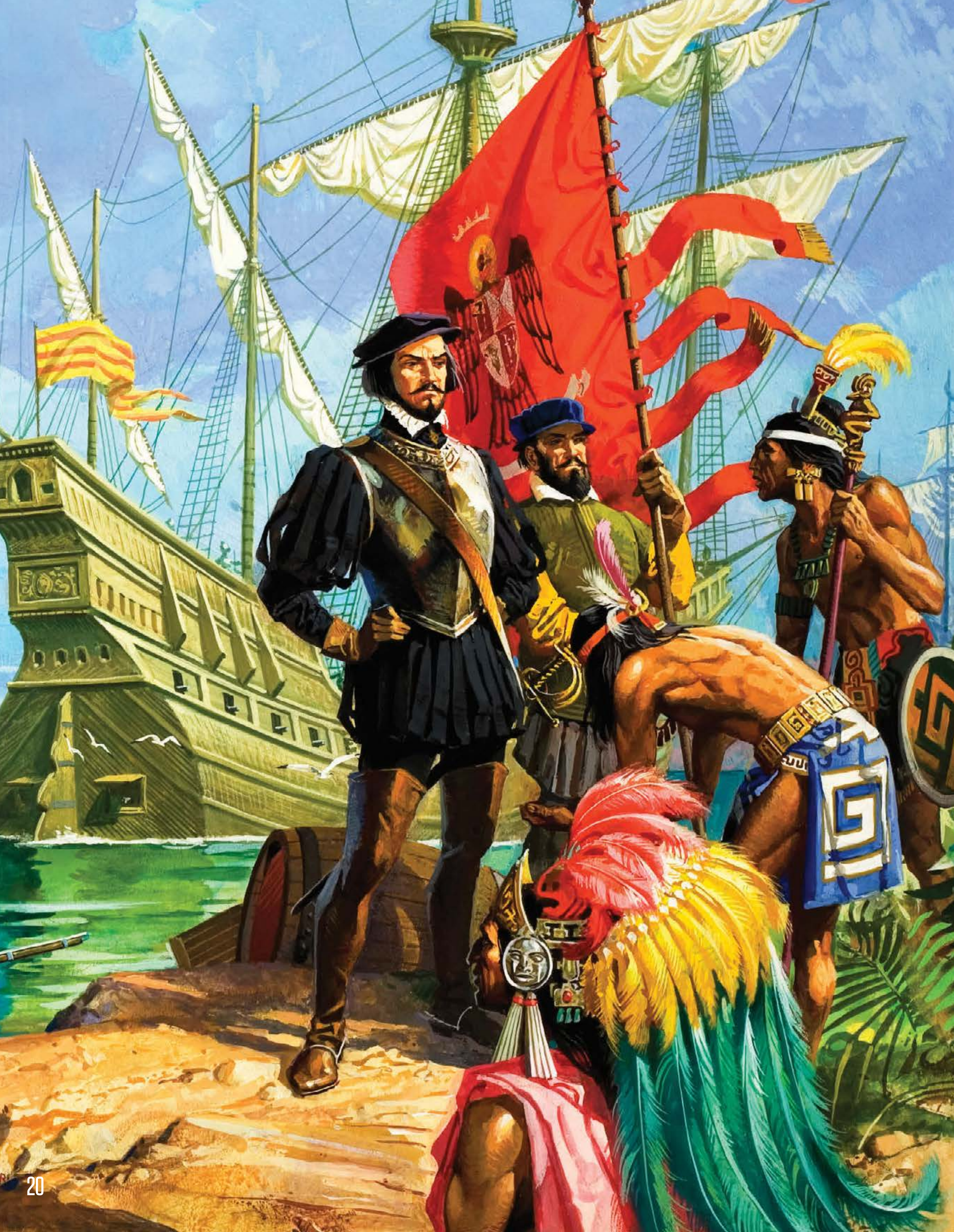
Origins and aftermath

The Apollo 11 lunar landing was the culmination of the space race between the USA and the Soviet Union that had begun with the Soviets launching the world's first satellite, Sputnik 1, on 4 October 1957. For much of the Sixties it had seemed the Soviets were ahead due to the many 'firsts' they achieved, including the first human in space in 1961. But ultimately, the Soviets' failure to build a capable manned lunar rocket saw USA claim victory. Five more lunar landings would take place before the Apollo programme was finished, but ultimately this competition would pave the way to cooperation in space exploration between the USA, USSR (now Russia) and other countries that we are still seeing the benefits of today, with programmes such as the International Space Station.

Launch of Apollo 17, the final mission of the Apollo lunar landing programme

© NASA; Peters & Zebransky



Heroes & Villains
Hernán Cortés

The adventures of the infamous 16th-century Spanish explorer Hernán Cortés and his brutal conquest of the Americas

Written by Chris Fenton

When Hernán Cortés walked through the burning city of Tenochtitlan in 1521 he couldn't be happier. He'd done it. He had endured the jungle, the heat, the hostile natives and the bureaucratic fools in Spain. He had taken the Americas, destroyed the pagan empire of the Aztecs and opened up its wonders for the glory of Spain and, of course, for himself. He glanced at the looting of the natives' precious metals and the raping of their women in their orderly, architecturally advanced thoroughfares, and dismissed it as fortunes of war; a war that he had won. He could see some of his conquistadors destroy one of the natives' strange idols and force the people around it to bow to the Christian cross. He was doing God's work and as he was about this glorious task, he was making a ton of money for himself. The siege of Tenochtitlan represented the peak of Cortés's blood-stained career in the New World, a career that would destroy cities and slaughter thousands in his endless quest for riches and glory.

> Colombus was the first to bring back coco beans from the new world, but it was Cortés who discovered their use as a drink

Few historical figures match the unquenchable greed of Cortés. He was a man of action out to make his fortune. He wasn't satisfied with a quiet life in the Spanish court listening to the endless bickering and squabbling, or the slow tedium of the Spanish provisional community. After dropping out of Salamanca University in 1501 through boredom, he decided he would strike out on his own, having been shunned by his family as 'mischievous, quarrelsome and a source of trouble.' He travelled to the Spanish port towns, cosmopolitan and wild, where he could reinvent himself among the exotic, tantalising trading communities. He enjoyed their delights - chiefly womanising and gambling - while listening to tales of wondrous opportunity from the sailors and conquistadors back from the New World. They would thrill him with stories of unending glory and fortune, a limitless flow of beautiful, exotic women and the chance to carve a lasting legacy in the virgin lands far across the vast ocean. He'd made up his mind. He would travel to this unexplored land and become part of the cut-throat business of exploration. With this in mind he set out for Santo Domingo (The Dominican Republic) in 1504, having just turned 19.

Cortés's early career in the New World was destructive and brutal. After contracting syphilis from various sexual liaisons in Santo Domingo, he spent seven years conquering and subduing the natives in Cuba with the Spanish conquistadores, earning a fearsome reputation among Spaniard and native alike. But these successes did not satisfy his insatiable thirst for wealth. He heard rumours of a huge city somewhere on the American mainland. A city paved with gold. A city where he could make his fortune. He quickly pulled together an expedition party and asked the governor of Santiago to seek royal assent for an expedition.

Cortés lived in a time when Spain was at the centre of European politics and was the foremost colonial power in the world

Life in the time of Hernán Cortés

Spain – the world's first superpower

Spain's power during the time of Cortés was unparalleled anywhere in Europe. It was a country built on the engine of empire and the colonies in America served only to feed the treasury of the King of Spain and the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. Charles used this money to expand his influence, making Spain the key player in Europe.

Religion ruled

Before the reformations in Europe, Catholicism was the dominant religion on the continent. There was no question of religious tolerance – you were either Catholic or a blasphemer. Severe punishments were exacted on anyone denying the word of God or the Christian faith. Spain spread Catholicism to its colonies, making it the dominant religion in Central and Latin America even to this day.

The great unknown

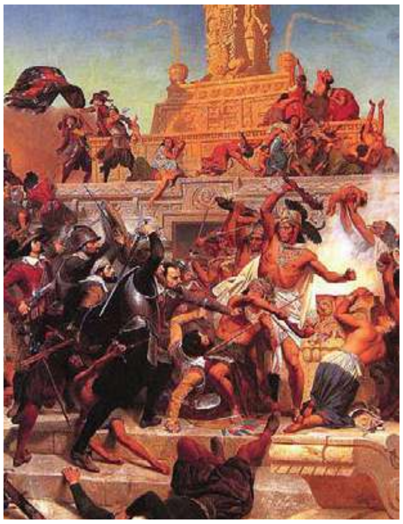
While exploration became a boom industry during this period, much of the Americas in the west and Asia in the east had yet to be explored. While European explorers could trace coastlines and make contact with some indigenous people living near the sea, there was not enough of them to make any lasting discoveries in the vast land masses that stretched beyond the coastlines.

Absolute power

There was no such thing as democracy as we know it during the time of Cortés – Europe was governed with an iron fist by absolute monarchs. This was seen as virtuous since it was God who decided who should rule, not the people. Anyone disputing this hierarchy was not only going against their ruler but also against God and divine right.

The courtly gentlemen

It was the gentlemen of the royal courts that made the wheels turn in the great European countries in the time of Cortés. However, it was not enough to just have this position, you had to behave in a courtly manner and act virtuously and godly at all times. Anyone who didn't would be shunned from court, often to the colonies and away from the centres of power.



Conquistador soldier vs Aztec warrior

Cortés did battle with thousands of Aztec warriors during his campaign of exploration in Central America. They were a fearsome people from warrior societies based around two predators – the eagle and the jaguar. Many dressed in the image of these animals to terrify enemies. Warriors could only join these societies if they had captured enemy soldiers or become renowned as great warriors through the rank and file of the Aztec military. Their weapon of choice was the macuahuitl sword, a club-like weapon with obsidian blades sticking out of the ends, which the warriors would use to beat their victims to death. Up against these deadly warriors were the conquistadors. They were rarely regular soldiers, although most of Cortés's men would have had some military experience. They were few in number and weighed down with armour and cumbersome European weapons. While they could hold their own against a small number of Aztec warriors, killing them from a distance with musket fire or using swords to slice through their thin armour, there simply weren't enough Conquistadors to take on the Aztecs by themselves. In order to bulk out this tiny army, Cortés employed the help of thousands of tribal warriors who hated the Aztecs and the outcome of many of Cortés's battles depended on these tribesmen.

Rather than wait, he set sail before the expedition was approved – he had his fortune to make.

When Cortés reached the American mainland, he quickly gained the trust of the native tribesmen in Aztec territory, his skill as a cunning negotiator cutting through the barriers of culture and language. He realised that it was the Aztecs who controlled the vast wealth in the region and, because of this, were hated by many of the tribes in the area. Sensing an opportunity to recruit people would help him fulfil his ambitions, so he made trades that sealed allegiances and one of these included a slave girl, Manlintzin, given as a gift by the Tabasco coastal tribe. The Spanish called her Dona Marina and Cortés, whose lust for gold was only exceeded by his lust for women, was delighted with her beauty and interpretation skills. He would quickly form an intimate relationship with her that lasted throughout his adventures in the Americas.

After months of trekking through the jungle, Cortés and his motley band came across something that would take their breath away – the city of Tenochtitlan. Rather than the simple huts and forest dwellings of the tribes they had seen before, they had found 'a city built in water, all made of stone which seemed like an enchanted vision... some of our soldiers asked whether it was not all a dream'. After an initially warm welcome, Montezuma II, ruler of the Aztecs, grew hostile to Cortés, especially when Cortés started acquiring more and more Aztec treasure for himself. Fearing that Montezuma would move against him, Cortés decided it was time to clip the wings of the all-powerful Aztec leader, holding him prisoner and persuading him to act as a vassal for the Spanish; Dona Marina's influence over Montezuma was instrumental in making him hand control of the city over to Cortés, but this was only the beginning of Cortés's problems.

> When he landed in what became known as Mexico, Cortés scuttled his fleet to remind his men that there was no going back

Disobeying orders, forming alliances without permission, stealing treasure and running roughshod over other peoples' countries rarely escaped the notice of the Spanish authorities and, by 1520, Spain had sent a force out to the Americas to arrest Cortés. Never a man to be undone by legal problems, especially when money was involved, Cortés marched out of Tenochtitlan, leaving the puppet Montezuma to rule in his stead and met the approaching conquistadors. After some tentative negotiations and a reassurance that there was enough booty for everyone, the soldiers sent to arrest Cortés joined him. However, by the time he returned to Tenochtitlan the Aztecs had rebelled against him after his forces had butchered some of their holy men during a festival. Cortés did not have enough men to put down the rebellion and was running short on food. He took decisive action and fed the Montezuma to the enraged crowd who, according to some accounts, was

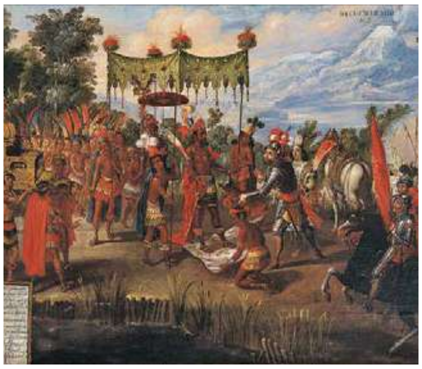
> "Cortés and his motley band came across something that would take their breath away – the city of Tenochtitlan"

Defining moment

Cortés meets Dona Marina

1519

Cortés meets Malintzin, known as Dona Marina after she is baptised. She becomes instrumental in serving as a translator when his expedition travels further inland, warning him of potential dangers from the various tribes and factions that made up the Aztec nation. Cortés would eventually make her his mistress and she gave him a son, Martin.



Timeline

1485

Birth of Hernán Cortés
Hernán Cortés is born in Medellín to Martin Cortés de Monroy and Dona Catalina Pizarro Altamarino, a family of relatively minor nobility.
1485

University drop out
Cortés decides to drop out of studying law and returns home, much to the disgust and dismay of his parents, who had hopes he would become a lawyer.
1501

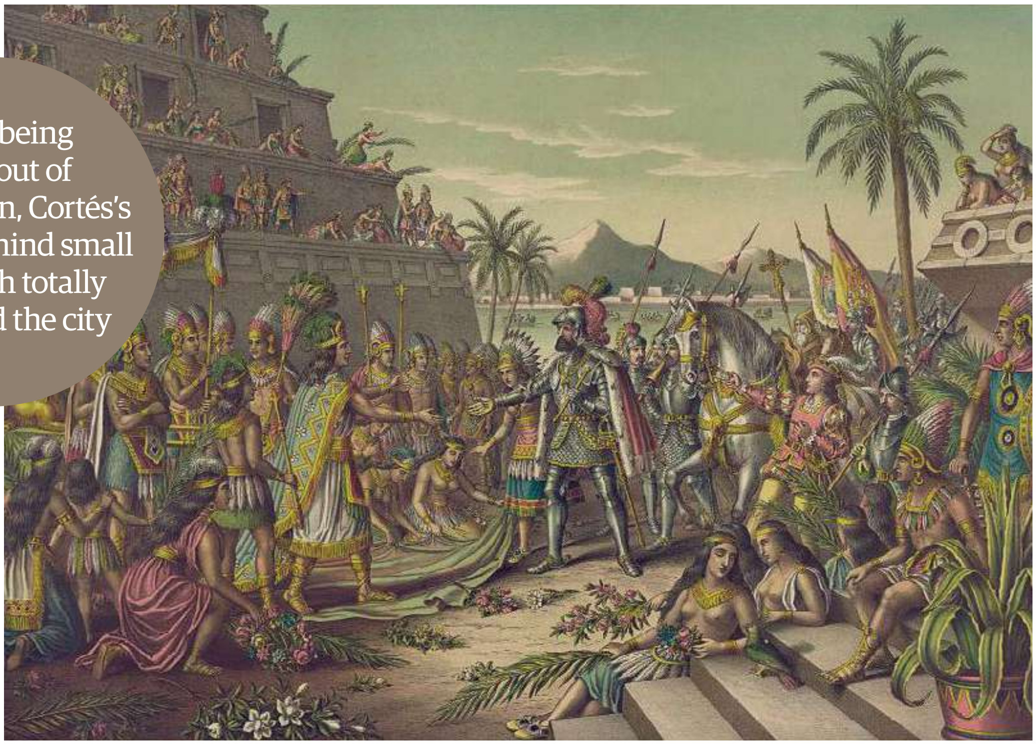
The New World
Tempted by the countless stories from abroad, Cortés leaves Spain for the New World, heading initially for Santo Domingo, the modern-day Dominican Republic.
1504

American mainland
Cortés leaves Santiago (Cuba) and sets sail for the American mainland in search of fortune, fame, adventure and the unknown. He does so without any permission from the Spanish authorities.
1518

First colony
Cortés establishes the first colony on the coast of the American mainland, naming it Veracruz, before pushing further inland through the uncharted and treacherous jungle, seeking greater wealth and treasure.
1519

stoned to death. Cortés then grabbed as much loot as he could find, gathering his men and fighting his way out of the city. In one of history's worst heists, Cortés overloaded his men with too much gold, causing them to fall through the weak bridges over the lakes surrounding the city as they tried to get away. Many Conquistadors drowned in what is remembered as the 'sorrowful night' and Cortés swore he'd be back to retake his prize.

> Before being driven out of Tenochtitlan, Cortés's men left behind small pox, which totally devastated the city



In the next six months Cortés used his considerable negotiating skills to acquire reinforcements from the Caribbean and make more alliances with the local tribes, acquiring thousands of native warriors. He had also brought with him an unseen ally: small pox. One of his men had passed it on to the Aztecs before they left Tenochtitlan. As the Aztecs starved and suffered the agony of the small pox pustules, Cortés set about destroying the city for four months, building by building, in a systematic and brutal slaughter. When the Aztecs finally surrendered, he took their new leader, Cuauhtemoc, and tortured him to find out where the rest of the treasures of the city were hidden. After months of exhausting warfare he wanted his reward.

The great Aztec Empire, which had stood for hundreds of years as a basin for advanced society in Central America, was in smouldering ruins. From now on it would be known as New Spain, of which Cortés appointed himself leader, but must have suspected there was little chance Spain would allow a man like him to stay in this powerful and politically sensitive position. After Charles V granted him his dues in title and money, he was summoned back to Spain to answer for his persistent disobedience to the state. He cleared his name, however, and continued to explore the world, thinking he could find another Tenochtitlan to make a greater fortune, but it never happened. After more incidents of insubordination he was sent back to Spain - this time for good - in his own words, 'old, poor and in debt'.

Cortés's enthusiasm, passion for glory and aspiration to shake off the shackles of mainstream society and get rich was an inspiration to his troops and the people he convinced to support his expeditions. To the native people of America he was fearsome, ruthless and akin to a devil in their mythology; he brought death and destruction wherever he went. To Cortés himself, he was a man who could always do better, get richer and live more grandly. By the time of his death in 1547 his grand designs were left unfulfilled because he ended up where he had started - in the provinces of Spain, living the life of an obscure rural lord.

Defining moment
Cortés discovers Tenochtitlan
1519

Cortés and his small band of conquistadors discover the city at the heart of the Aztec Empire, Tenochtitlan. They are struck by what they see; a city built upon lakes with grand boulevards, huge temples and large open markets all made of stone. They are treated as gods and, seizing this opportunity, Cortés quickly takes as much gold as he can find in the city. He then captures the Aztec ruler Montezuma and forces him to act as a vassal for the Spanish state.

Defining moment
Tenochtitlan destroyed
1521

After months of siege warfare the city of Tenochtitlan is destroyed and eventually remains at only a quarter of its original size. When Cortés finally storms the city, its inhabitants are starving and dying of small pox. Nearly 240,000 Aztecs die in the siege. Cortés renames Tenochtitlan Mexico City and creates the province of New Spain out of what remains of the Aztec territory. The Aztec nation ceases to exist as it once did.

1547

Aztec rebellion
After negotiating with a body of conquistadors sent to arrest him, Cortés returns to Tenochtitlan to find that the Aztecs have rebelled against Montezuma. He is forced to quickly make his escape from the city
1520 June

Devastating disease
The Aztecs of Tenochtitlan start developing small pox and it brutally ravishes the population since they have no resistance to European disease.
1520 July

Tlaxcalan territory
Cortés and his by now dilapidated army reach the Tlaxcalan tribe, which they had befriended months before. Cortés now begins to rebuild his forces in preparation for a final assault on the city of Tenochtitlan.
1520 July

Recalled to Spain
Success in the field creates enemies for Cortés at home and through political intrigue he is ousted from the governorship of New Spain. He is recalled to Spain a little over a year later to answer charges including misconduct and murder.
1528

Baja California
Having successfully defended his position in Spain, Cortés returns to Mexico rejuvenated and commissions an exploration to find a route to the Pacific. However, he actually discovers California instead.
1535

Unfulfilled ambition
Cortés is forced to return to Spain, having lost much of his wealth. He dies there in poverty in 1547, while attempting to get to a ship going back to Mexico.
1547

© Look and Learn

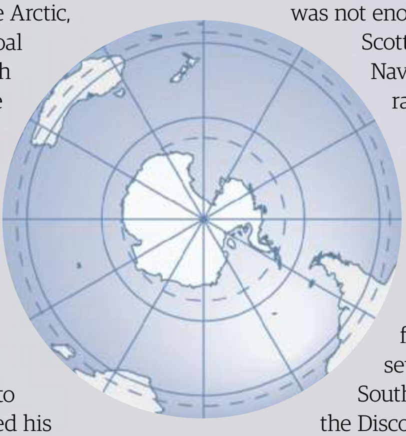
Race to the Antarctic

How lies, Captain Scott's old imperial view of exploration and a tug of war between science and discovery led to his team dying in the freezing ice desert of Antarctica

Written by Andy Brown

When the news arrived via telegram the response was a mixture of shock, disbelief and amazement. The news would also ultimately contribute to the death of an English Captain and his four men as far away from the land of hope and glory as it was possible to imagine.

The telegram revealed that two parties had both reached the North Pole in the Arctic, which for decades had been the goal of explorers around the world. Both men claiming to have reached one of the most inhospitable points on the planet were American – Robert E Perry and Dr Frederick Cook. While neither party provided sufficient information to silence the sceptics the report stirred one explorer into action: Roald Amundsen.



The news shattered the Norwegian's dream to be the first to reach the North Pole, so he changed his goal to the South Pole. Amundsen knew that an English captain called Scott was also preparing for such a journey and would be furious to know he had a rival. He made his preparations in secret, hand-picked a small team and sailed from Norway under cover of darkness. Only when the ship had reached the island of Madeira off West Africa did he tell his shocked men of their actual destination before sending off telegrams informing the world of his plans. One of these was to Scott and simply read: "Beg leave to inform you proceeding Antarctica. Amundsen." The race was on.

Robert Falcon Scott was no stranger to Antarctic exploration. In 1901 the British Naval officer captained the custom-built ship Discovery in its quest to explore new land and carry out scientific research. The ship did not return to British shores until 1904 and the expedition instilled some beliefs in Scott that would be key in this later race with Amundsen, such as his distrust of huskies. An expedition in 1902 saw Scott, Earnest Shackleton and Dr Wilson set off on a bold journey to travel south and see how far they could get. Scott noted in his diary that he would "prefer ten days of man-hauling to one spent in driving a worn-out dog team." When the team returned to their base camp they had been away for over 90 days and covered 1,545 kilometres (960 miles). They had come closer to the South Pole than anyone else had – but this was not enough for the ambitious explorer.

Scott returned home a hero and the Navy promptly promoted him to the rank of captain. He was suddenly elevated to high society – he attended dinners and drinks with some of London's most exclusive socialites, and it was here that he met his future wife, Kathleen Bruce an artist and sculptress.

While he was in England his former team member, Shackleton, set off on his own expedition to the South Pole – the two had quarrelled on the Discovery and this latest news drove a final wedge between them – and although he didn't reach the fabled pole, he was also considered a hero and was knighted on return. Britain's seemingly endless thirst for brave explorers was tied into the idea of national prestige; the largest empire in the world wanted to grasp another small

12 September 1911

Prospects of milder weather doubtful – all this persuaded me to settle for reaching the depot at 80° this time... To risk men and animals out of sheer obstinacy and continue, just because we have started on our way – that would never occur to me. If we are to win this game, the pieces must be moved carefully – one false move, and everything can be lost. R.A

Captain Robert Scott's ship, the Terra Nova

Exploration history

1901-1904
Led the Discovery expedition during which Scott gained the record for proximity to the South Pole. He retuned home a hero.

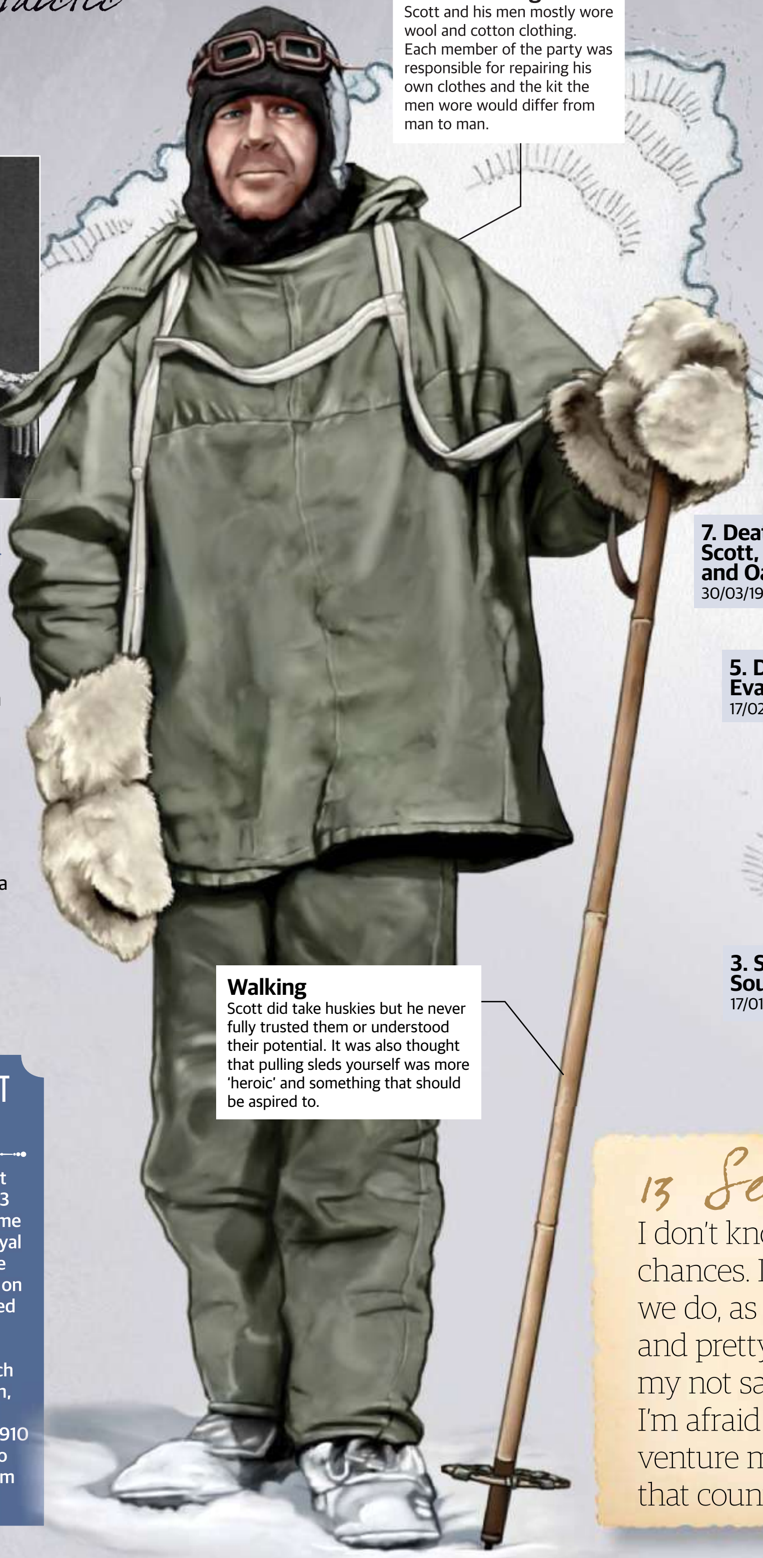
1910
Leader of the Terra Nova Expedition to the South Pole. The trip also had scientific ambitions.

ROBERT FALCON SCOTT

British, 1868-1912

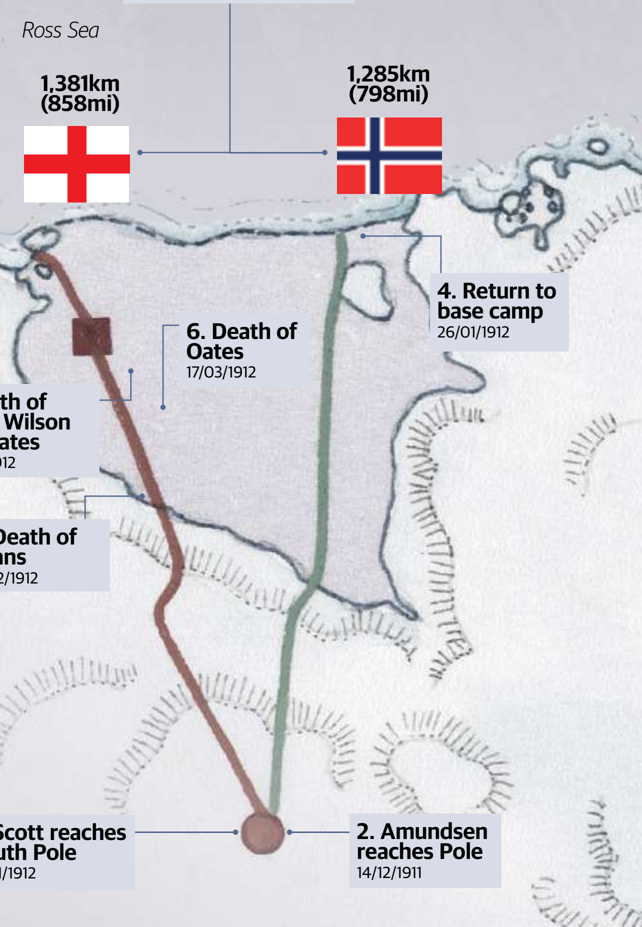
Brief Bio

Scott joined his first ship when he was 13 years old and became an officer in the Royal Navy where he rose to the rank of captain. While on home leave in 1899 he learned of an impending Antarctic exploration for which he volunteered to lead and which caught the public imagination, with him returning home something of a celebrity. In 1910 he set off on an expedition to the South Pole, a journey from which he would not return.



Wool clothing
Scott and his men mostly wore wool and cotton clothing. Each member of the party was responsible for repairing his own clothes and the kit the men wore would differ from man to man.

Walking
Scott did take huskies but he never fully trusted them or understood their potential. It was also thought that pulling sleds yourself was more 'heroic' and something that should be aspired to.



1. Race begins
The team of British explorers set off from their base camp near Ross Island on 1 November. Amundsen's men departed from their base camp on 19 October.

2. Amundsen reaches Pole
14/12/1911

3. Scott reaches South Pole
17/01/1912

4. Return to base camp
26/01/1912

5. Death of Evans
17/02/1912

6. Death of Oates
17/03/1912

7. Death of Scott, Wilson and Oates
30/03/1912

13 September 1911

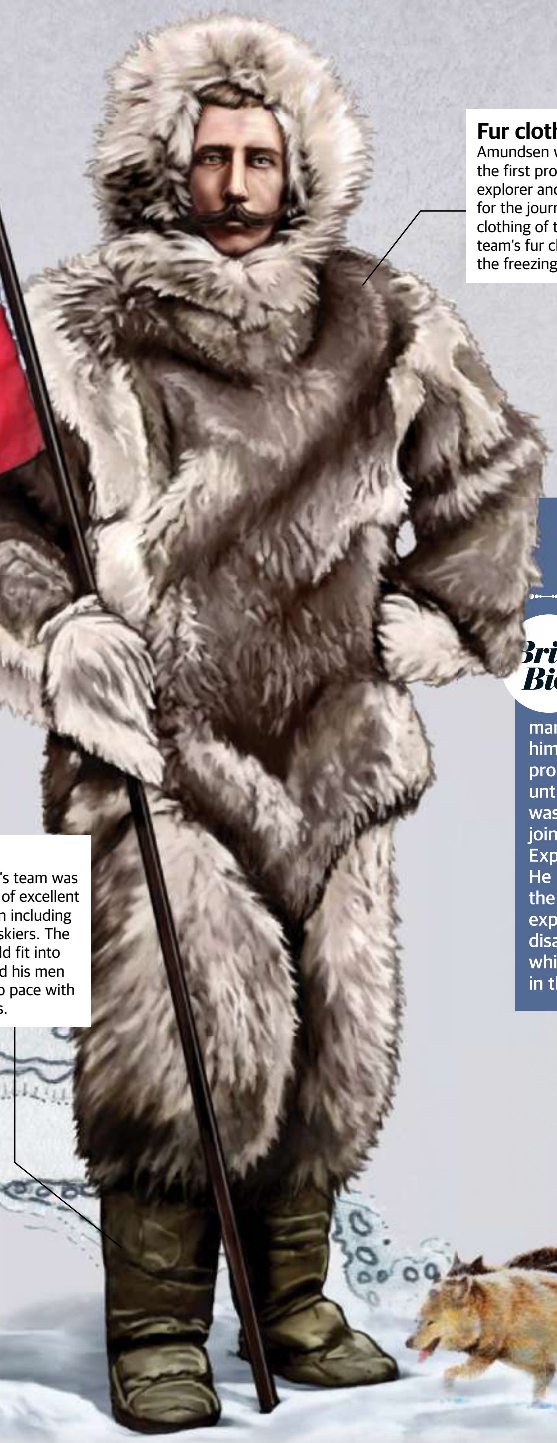
> I don't know what to think of Amundsen's chances. If he gets to the Pole it must be before we do, as he is bound to travel fast with dogs and pretty certain start early... You can rely on my not saying or doing anything foolish, only I'm afraid you must be prepared for finding our venture much belittled. After all, it is the work that counts, not the applause that follows. R.S

and icy corner into its not inconsiderable bosom. The South Pole was the last great, unmapped corner of the world; the last symbol of discovery. Scott wanted this honour for himself and his country.

The British explorer began to assemble his team and it was clear from the outset that this was not just about reaching the South Pole first – the team also had genuine goals of scientific discovery. This feeling was summed up neatly in a letter from the expedition's scientific director, Dr Edward Wilson, to his father in which he wrote; "We want the scientific work to make the bagging of the Pole merely an item in the results." This ambition, this desire for the trip to also be about science, would play its part in Scott's death. For Amundsen – who has been coined the first 'professional polar explorer' – there were no such distractions. He was leading a raid with one clear goal, to reach the South Pole. Everything he and his team did was with this objective firmly in mind. Science, as he said: "...would have to look after itself."

The ship that was to transport Scott and his men to the Antarctic was the Terra Nova and a stopover in New Zealand offered one of the final chances to ensure it was adequately stocked. The party were not to be reliant on dogs (although they would take 33) but instead rely on ponies and three newfangled motor sleds, which Scott hoped would aid them but was another area of the party's scientific discovery. The sleds had been tested and proven to work, but not in conditions comparable to the South Pole. There were other transport problems as well; one of Scott's men, Captain Oats, was horrified when he saw the state of the 19 ponies. They were quite old and four of them were discovered to be lame and put down. On 29 November 1910, the ship set sail for Antarctica and on 4 January landed at a base – not Scott's old Discovery headquarters on the tip of Ross Island, but ten kilometres (six miles) further along on a headland that he named Cape Evans, after his second-in-command. While unloading, the largest motor sled fell through the ice and was lost forever in the freezing-cold water below. It would not be the last misfortune the party suffered.

In direct contrast, Amundsen's team had staked their mission's success on dogs. As Ronald Huntford explains in *Race for the South Pole*, their ship Fram



Norwegian flag
The race for the South Pole wasn't just between two men but two countries. Norway only became an independent country in 1905, so for a Norwegian to plant a flag at the South Pole was a great matter of pride.

Fur clothing
Amundsen was known as the first professional polar explorer and in planning for the journey studied the clothing of the Inuit. His team's fur clothing helped in the freezing conditions.

Boots
Amundsen's team was comprised of excellent skiers, even including champion skiers. The boots would fit into the skis and his men would keep pace with the huskies.

Huskies
The Norwegian was well aware of the importance of huskies. Amundsen took a large team of huskies to pull their supplies, rather than the more labour-intensive manhauling.

Exploration history

1903
Led a team of six men on the first expedition to traverse Canada's Northwest Passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

1910
Planned his ultimately successful trip to the South Pole but he was not finished exploring.

1918
Two-year expedition to explore the undiscovered areas of the Arctic Ocean.

ROALD AMUNDSEN

Norwegian, 1872-1928

Brief Bio

Born to a family of Norwegian shipowners and captains in Borge, his mother wanted him to avoid the family maritime trade and encouraged him to become a doctor, a promise that Amundsen kept until his mother died when he was 21. He quit university and joined the Belgian Antarctic Expedition in 1897 as first mate. He led the first team to reach the South Pole and continued exploring afterward. Amundsen disappeared on 18 June 1928, while flying on a rescue mission in the Arctic.

Roald Amundsen at the South Pole in 1911

was: "…a floating kennel. One hundred Eskimo dogs were draped about the ship… the 19 men on board pandered to their every whim for the animals were the key to their enterprise." The Norwegians had gotten these animals from Greenland as they were thought to be the best for these conditions and planned to run sled dogs with men behind them on skis. Amundsen had studied Inuit culture and picked up tips on how they travelled and dressed.

Scott had a different approach to exploration. While it would be grossly unfair to paint him as out of touch regarding exploration – and the use of motor sleds showed his willingness to innovate – his approach had more than a touch of the old empire about it; for him a successful journey would be made with the attributes of hard work, a stiff upper lip, strong leadership and British strength in adversity. This is illustrated in the attitude to men hauling their equipment rather having it pulled by dogs – this was seen as more 'heroic'. He mostly chose Naval men for his expedition, rather than those with Antarctic experience.

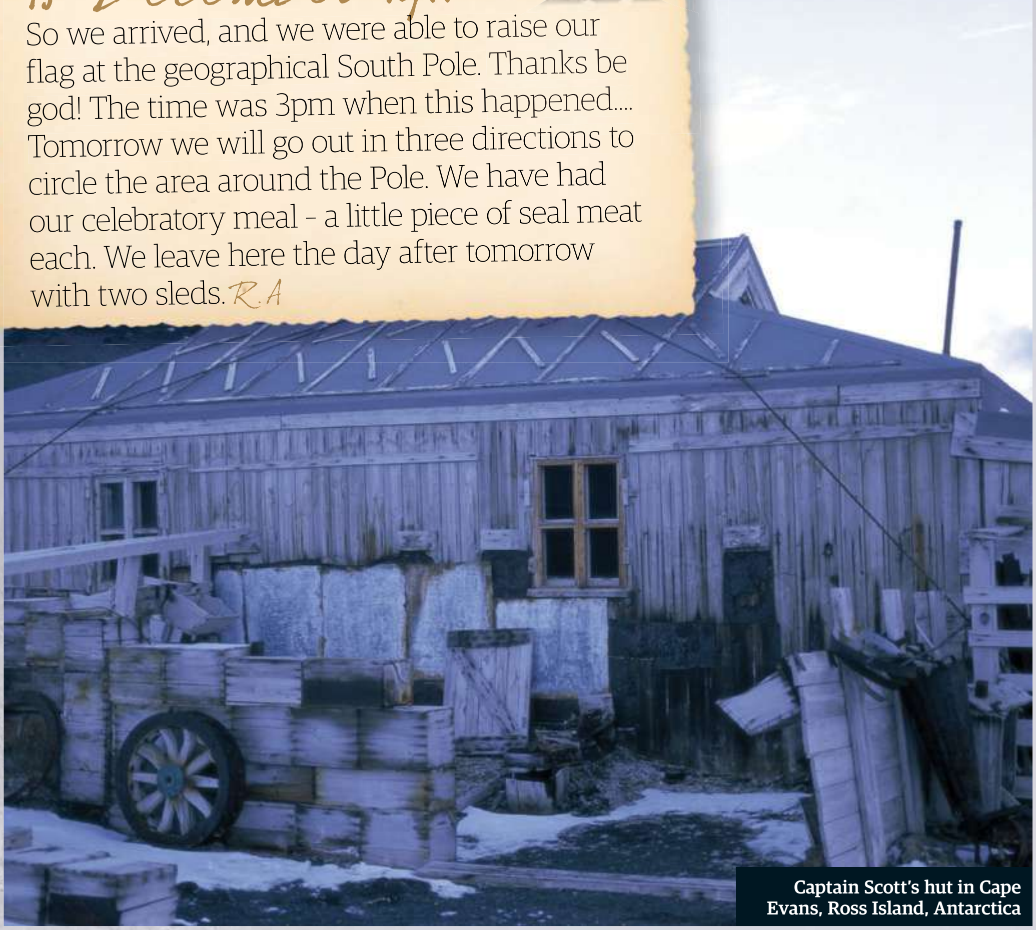
It was, in spirit at least, an 'old-fashioned' adventure – his rival saw it more as a professional mission and recruited for the job accordingly, by getting the best dogs and most experienced men, skiers and dog handlers possible.

The two rivals initially followed similar paths to the South Pole – after unloading and building their winter accommodation they both started preparing for the race ahead by laying depots along the early parts of the route before winter set in and made passage even more treacherous. These depots contained food and fuel for the return journey to limit the amount of kit the parties would have to set off with. They both settled in for the winter months, refining the plans they hoped would ensure their names lived forever in the annals of heroic Antarctic explorers, but in some respects, their preparations differed.

Due to his expedition's scientific slant, Scott's men carried out several other mapping and geological missions and there was another, more specific mission: to find and bring back an Emperor penguin egg. This had never been achieved before and on 27 June 1911, a three-man expedition set off from base camp.

15 December 1911

So we arrived, and we were able to raise our flag at the geographical South Pole. Thanks be god! The time was 3pm when this happened.... Tomorrow we will go out in three directions to circle the area around the Pole. We have had our celebratory meal – a little piece of seal meat each. We leave here the day after tomorrow with two sleds. R.A



Captain Scott's hut in Cape Evans, Ross Island, Antarctica

Scott's hut

The hut was actually elaborate, with space for 27 inhabitants. The space was divided by a wall into two sections; one for officers and gentlemen and another for the men. Pride of place was given to the fully equipped darkroom. The inside was lit by gas and there was a stove and cooking range. The toilets were situated in front of the hut – again divided in terms of officers and men. Activities to pass the time included moonlight football, lectures on topics such as 'horse management', killing and skinning ponies and scientific endeavours.

A dejected Scott and his team at the South Pole in January 1912

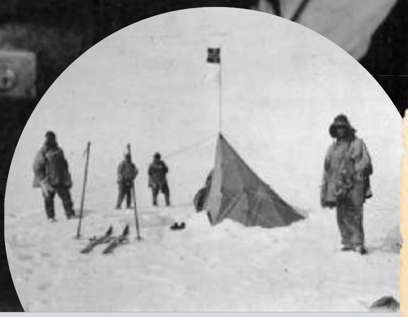
The men had to pull two sleds of food, fuel and equipment to reach the penguin's breeding colony at Cape Crozier, 112 kilometres (70 miles) away and ended up getting lost. The trio eventually found the colony and returned five weeks later with three eggs. Scott called it "one of the most gallant stories in Polar history", but others have questioned whether – despite the noble intentions – the time might have been better served preparing for the trek to the South Pole. The expedition eventually brought back over 40,000 different specimens and their research produced 15 volumes of bound reports. Scott's was indeed not just a mission to be first to the South Pole.

Bunkered down in his hut, Scott had been revising his plans all winter and when Lieutenant Evans, his second in command, was away checking on depots he announced his plan. In Catherine Charley's *South Pole*, she speculates that this was because Evans was the only man Scott feared would stand up to him, but there is no evidence to support this. The Englishman's plan was to leave on 3 November and he calculated that the 2,460-kilometre (1,530-mile) round trek would take 144 days. Four types of transport would be used – man hauling, ponies, dogs and the motorised sleds – but Scott wanted to rely on ponies and man hauling. A party of men would travel past the Beardmore Glacier before three men would continue the final leg of the journey to the South Pole with Scott. Some of the men felt that the plans were optimistic and hadn't planned for any contingencies. Indeed, the scientist George Simpson wrote in his diary: "There is little margin and a few accidents, a spell of bad weather, would bring not only failure but also very likely disaster." Whatever the individual thoughts of the men, the plan was settled and the race could begin.

The team were split into different groups that set off at staggered times in what was the Antarctic summer – the sun now lived above the horizon. Evans was in charge of one party that had the two motorised sleds and Scott was shocked when his party came across them lying abandoned on the ice, collecting snowflakes. A note left by Evans explained that the sleds had broken down and could not be repaired so his party had continued, hauling their supplies manually. To make matters worse, it became apparent that the ponies were not suited for the conditions. Amundsen's party suffered no such difficulties. They had set off in a smaller group of five and all of them were experienced skiers and dog drivers. In contrast to Scott, Amundsen had also allowed a generous provision of supplies, meaning they had a good safety margin.

The conditions both parties encountered was frequently horrific – there was a reason no other exploration group had reached the South Pole before. There were times when the visibility was so bad they couldn't see anything in front of them. The sun never set and the light this generated and reflected off the snow was very intense. The average temperature reached -50 degrees Celsius (-58 degrees Fahrenheit) with -21 degrees Celsius (-6 degrees Fahrenheit) the norm, and the wind ripped unmercifully around them.

With his group just 240 kilometres (150 miles) away from their objective, Scott changed his mind about this final party. He would now take four men with him, rather than three, with the extra man being Lieutenant Bowers. This move has been used as a stick to beat Scott with. The party now had four men but the food had only been rationed for three, which even then had little margin for error. The party had gained another experienced navigator but at what cost to their food supplies? With the decision made Scott and his four men



18 January 1912

We have just arrived at this tent, two miles from our camp, therefore about 1 1/2 miles from the Pole. In the tent we find a record of five Norwegians having been here ... We have turned our back now on the goal of our ambition and must face our 800 miles of solid dragging – and good-bye to most of the day-dreams! R. S.

set off, walking stiffly against the chill wind as the rest of the party headed the other direction, back to the to the team's base camp and safety, if not immortality. Over a week after separating, on January 9, Scott's party reached and then beat Shackleton's record of proximity to the Pole. Scott had beaten one of his great rivals, but there was another one, much more dangerous, making his way metronomically towards the target.

Scott didn't know it but Amundsen had beaten Shackleton's record exactly a month before him. His men were feeling the conditions, their dogs were getting hungry and dangerous – they had to be wary at night-time that the animals didn't attack them – but they were close. As they moved towards their goal tensions were high – would they see Scott's party returning triumphant? They did not. On 15 December 1911, after extensively consulting their compasses, Amundsen and his men shook hands in silence and then drove the Norwegian flag deep into the ground. The group didn't want anyone to question what they had achieved. They set off to a place which Amundsen's calculations concluded was the true Pole (later research would show he was just 200 metres (660 feet) off – a fantastic bit of navigating) and pitched a tent in which they left anything they didn't need. Amundsen set another flag outside their camp on the route the British would later cross, and wrote two letters and his diary. In his journal he wrote: "Farewell dear Pole. I don't think we'll meet again."

Never had a flag caused such a devastating impact on a group of weary men. The flag that Amundsen had planted was like a dagger slid into their ribs as the men stood motionless among the dogs' paw prints which were still dotted around in the snow. The troops were disconsolate but Scott insisted that they finish their journey and plant a British flag. They reached Amundsen's tent and found a letter addressed to Scott. It read: "As you are probably the first to reach the area after us I will ask you kindly to forward this letter to King Haakon VII. If you can use any of the articles left in the tent please do not hesitate to do so. With kind regards. I wish you a safe return."

After grabbing some of the Norwegians' warm clothing and hoisting the British flag aloft, they began to contemplate the return journey. They had to cover 1,290 kilometres (800 miles),

"I may be some time" – These were Scott's men

Dr Wilson

British 1872–1912

Chief of the scientific staff

Wilson travelled with Scott on his Discovery mission. He also led the mission to retrieve an Emperor penguin egg.

Captain Oates

British, 1880-1912

In charge of ponies and mules

Oates sacrificed himself when he left his companions and walked into the elements as he knew he was slowing them down.

Lieutenant Bowers

British, 1883-1912

Commissariat officer

Although Scott was not initially impressed by Bowers he proved himself to be a skilled organiser.

Petty Officer Evans, RN

British, 1876-1912

In charge of sledges and equipment

A giant of a man, Evans was responsible for all the equipment including the sleds, sleeping bags.

29 March 1912

Every day we have been ready to start for our depot 11 miles away, but outside the door of the tent it remains a scene of whirling drift. I do not think we can hope for any better things now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far. It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more. R.S

dragging their sleds themselves. Using a pole from Amundsen's flag, they attached a sail to their sleds and headed off into the distance, desperately hoping that a strong wind would catch the sail and propel them onward. As the weeks went on, the men experienced frostbite and it was clear they were slowly starving to death.

Their mission to make it to the South Pole had failed but, incredibly, Scott wasn't prepared to also give up the trip's scientific endeavours. He agreed that Wilson could spend an afternoon collecting rock samples to take back for scientific research. Not only did this take up time and energy but also added to the weight the team had to carry. By Saturday 17 February 1912 the group had covered 640 kilometres (400 miles) – about half of the distance – and were showing serious signs of injury and fatigue, with Evans the worst. His fingers were suffering from frostbite and he collapsed, feeling sick and giddy. He got up again but when the group set off they consistently had to wait for him to catch up – on one occasion Scott went back to retrieve him and found him crawling in the snow, He died soon afterward, the first of the party to not make it back to base camp.

There was no time to grieve. If they were to survive they had to keep moving, living from food depot to food depot. At this point they were travelling approximately 11 kilometres (seven miles) and walking for nine hours a day. Oates had frostbite in his feet that were turning to gangrene. He cut a slit in his sleeping bag and slept with his feet outside; he couldn't cope with the agony of his feet unfreezing and then freezing again. He knew he was holding up his companions and so one night moved to the entrance of the tent, turned and said: "I am just going outside and may be some time." They watched him limp off into the surrounding snow, all knowing they would never see him again.

Scott himself could now hardly walk and while Wilson and Bowers thought they could make it to the next food depot, the three men stayed together in the tent as a storm blew wildly around them outside. If their rival hadn't believed the lies of the men who claimed to have made it to the North Pole and changed his target, it has been speculated Scott and his men could have survived – they were a mere 18 kilometres (11 miles) from the next food depot. Would knowing they had reached the South Pole first have given them the heart and strength needed to carry on? Still, the three men waited to die in their tent and wrote notes; Wilson and Bowers to their families and Scott to the press, his family and sponsors. He also wrote his last diary entry.

As the sun reappeared for the next Antarctic summer, a search party spotted the top of Captain Scott's tent pole peeking out of the snow. They found Scott and his men, their letters, diaries and photos. The tent was almost completely covered; one other bout of heavy snow before the search party reached the tent would have covered it, with the fate of the men – and their own private words and thoughts – lost to the ages. After singing *Onward Christian Soldiers*, Scott's favourite hymn, they built a cross, placed it on the tent and then left it to the conditions.

The British expedition had failed through a combination of poor planning, skewed priorities and plain bad luck, but the courage and self-sacrifice the men showed until the bitter end has proven to be inspirational. A cross still stands near the beach by Cape Evans in memorial to the men. The final words are: 'To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.' Whatever his faults, the gentleman explorer encompassed all of those fine ideals.

7 March 1912

Arrived at Hobart at 11am. Went ashore with the doctor and the harbourmaster. Booked into the Orient hotel. Was treated like a tramp – my peaked cap and blue sweater – given a miserable little room. Immediately visited the Norwegian consul, McFarlane, and was very warmly received by the old gentleman... Thereafter telegraphed the King. R.A

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Amundsen and his crew in Alaska, aboard the Norwegian ship that was the first to navigate solo through the Northwest Passage in 1903-1906

THE Great land TO THE SOUTH

HOW THE WORLD DISCOVERED AUSTRALIA

The promise of a great southern land captivated sailors, pirates, merchants, kings and even popes. We discover how strong winds, astral bodies, religious fervour and economics led us to Australia

Written by James Hoare

On 20 August 1770, the flag of Great Britain was hoisted over the silver sands to flutter in the breeze. Three volleys were fired by the landing party, and then answered by the Bark Endeavour, moored in the bay.

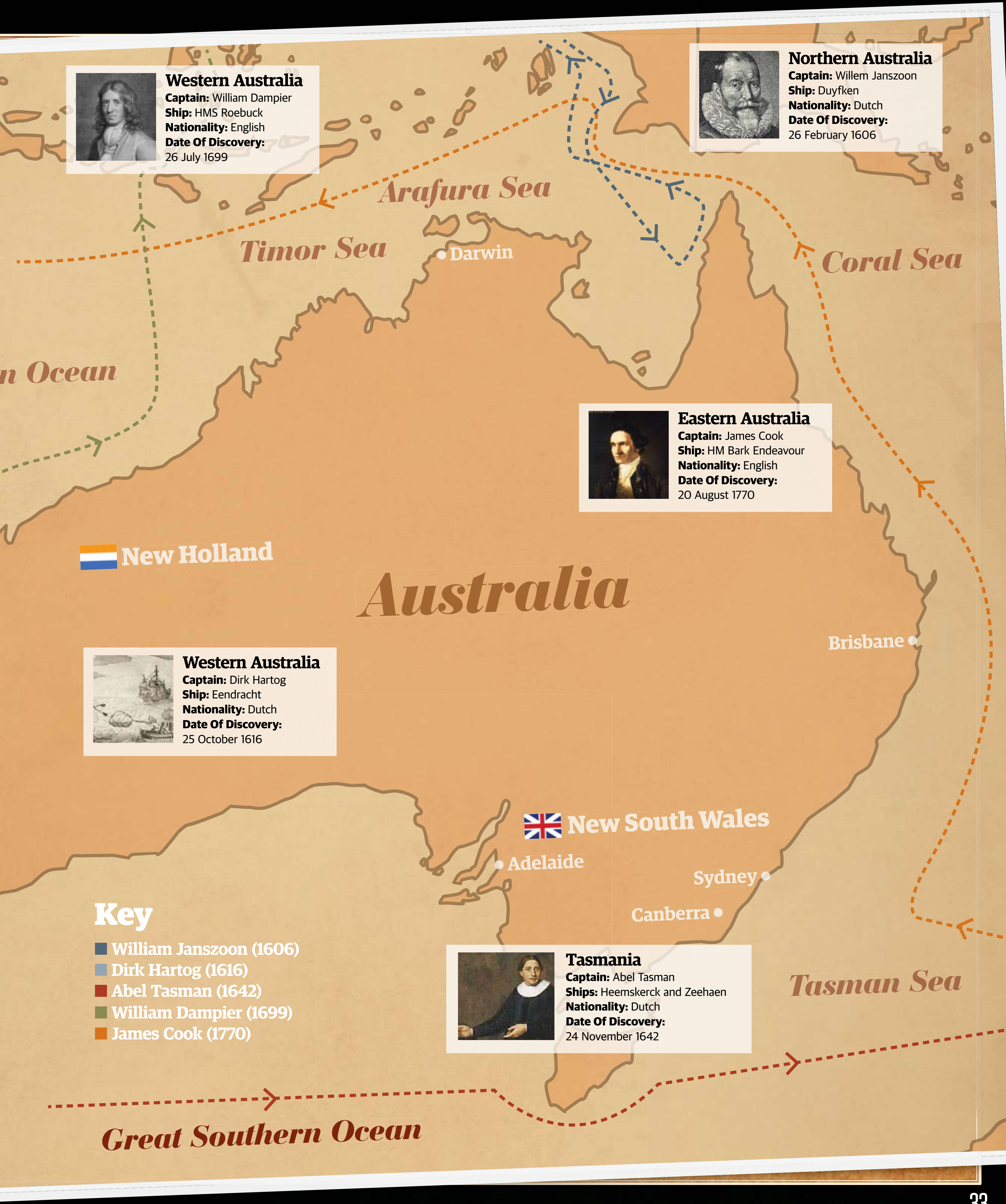
James Cook and his crew had been at sea for 724 days with Plymouth a distant memory, and it had been 141 days since they had left New Zealand behind. Less than 100-strong, a tiny ship in a vast ocean, they had mapped the coastline, every island and inlet, before tacking west to Van Diemen's Land, then north in search of the eastern coast of Terra Australis Incognita – the unknown land of the south – promised in his sealed orders.

Ostensibly in the Pacific to witness the rare transit of Venus across the sun, their's was a swashbuckling secret mission in the name of discovery, with a royal warrant to claim unsettled lands for the crown, and record alien sights and skies for science. When explorer, astronomer and enlightenment hero Lieutenant James Cook stepped ashore and claimed the great southern land for Britain – naming the whole eastern chunk of this vast continent New South Wales in the process – he wasn't discovering a new world so much as he was meeting an old friend.

The dream of Australia had dominated the European exploration of Asia for 400 years, and had been a myth of Atlantean proportions for much longer. Cook wasn't the first to arrive, flag in hand, and stretched out before him was a road paved with shipwreck, war, spice and piracy, but first, there had to be the idea itself.

15,913 kilometres (9,888 miles) and well over 1,000 years away, Pythagoras set light to Cook's imagination. Around 530 BCE, the Methuselah of mathematics had decamped to Croton in modern Italy to escape the tyranny in his Greek island homeland of Samos. Travelling widely from Egypt to India before founding his school of ideas and gathering his followers, he put his experiences to work, devising the theorem that bears his name, and a slightly less well-known one about the musical values of various lengths of string.

India
Perth



Western Australia

Captain: William Dampier
Ship: HMS Roebuck
Nationality: English
Date Of Discovery:
26 July 1699

Northern Australia

Captain: Willem Janszoon
Ship: Duyfken
Nationality: Dutch
Date Of Discovery:
26 February 1606

Eastern Australia

Captain: James Cook
Ship: HM Bark Endeavour
Nationality: English
Date Of Discovery:
20 August 1770

Western Australia

Captain: Dirk Hartog
Ship: Eendracht
Nationality: Dutch
Date Of Discovery:
25 October 1616

Tasmania

Captain: Abel Tasman
Ships: Heemskerck and Zeehaen
Nationality: Dutch
Date Of Discovery:
24 November 1642

Key

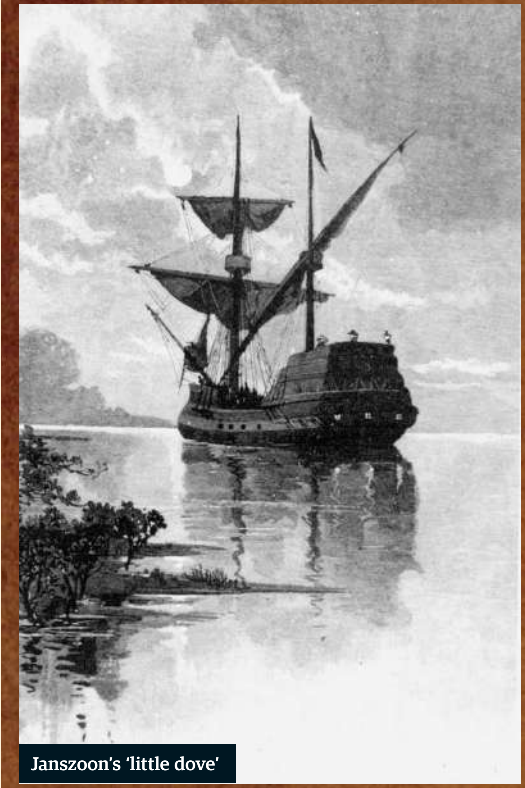
- 🟦 William Janszoon (1606)
- 🟦 Dirk Hartog (1616)
- 🟥 Abel Tasman (1642)
- 🟩 William Dampier (1699)
- 🟧 James Cook (1770)

Arafura Sea
Timor Sea
Darwin
Coral Sea
n Ocean
New Holland
Australia
Brisbane
New South Wales
Adelaide
Sydney
Canberra
Tasman Sea
Great Southern Ocean

> "The dream of Australia dominated European exploration of Asia for 400 years, and had been a myth of Atlantean proportions much longer"

Pythagoras was also credited with the notion that our world was a sphere, and so there had to be a vast landmass to the south to balance this orb. Two centuries later, Aristotle advanced this theory based on the circular shadow of the Earth during a lunar eclipse and the changing places of constellations the further south you sailed. In the wake of Aristotle's studies of the night sky, the Roman geographer Pomponius Mela (1st century) produced maps dividing the world into northern and southern zones, and later the Greco-Roman astrologer, astronomer, geographer and all-round busy thinker Claudius Ptolemy (90–168 CE) compiled all the knowledge that he could of the world's regions into his immense *Geographia*, adding that the route to the great southern land was no doubt impassible due to "monstrosities."

The idea of this new expanse – Terra Australis – took root in the foundation of Renaissance geography and cartography, until every map came with a vaguely defined great southern land. Just as Cook's 1768 mission – a fact-finding expedition for the Royal Society of London – came with its sealed orders to increase the reach of the British Empire, it was politics and economics that set his spiritual predecessors off on their voyages of discovery.



Janszoon's 'little dove'

In 1368, the mighty Mongol Empire, that stretched from Eastern Europe to the Sea of Japan, collapsed, ruling out the overland journey to the riches of China and India. The surprisingly cordial relationship between the Khan and the Pope was replaced by tensions between Christian Europe and the rising Islamic Ottoman Empire, which closed the overland routes to the east. Their hand forced by demand for spices, silk, tea and porcelain, the mercantile nations – the Portuguese and Spanish at first, and then the Dutch, French and English – began to look for sea routes into the Indian Ocean and beyond.

While the European superpowers began to look upon their maps and globes anew, the powerful Tamil merchant dynasties of Sri Lanka established their own maritime trade empire that stretched its fingers across South East Asia between the 9th and 14th centuries. Their holds stuffed with the luxuries of India, and the traditional Tamil proverb "cross the oceans and acquire gold" on their lips, they made their presence felt through art and architecture in Thailand, Java, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia. By the 18th century – though their once great empire had declined, replaced by colonial Portuguese, and then Dutch and British – Tamils were trading with the European settlers in New Zealand and Australia. Yet there's evidence to suggest that they'd been there before: a 14th century ship's bell, beautifully inscribed in Tamil, found in 1836 being used as a Māori cooking pot.

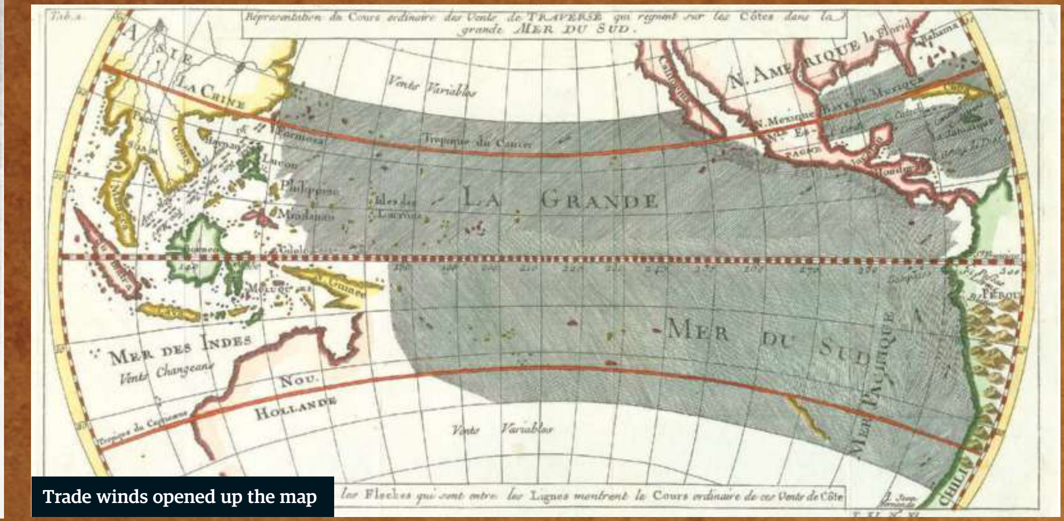
Now locked in a mercantile Cold War, following a belligerent race for territory and trade across the gradually opening globe, the Portuguese and Spanish reached a frosty impasse with 1494's Treaty of Tordesillas, dividing North and South America between them, and then 1529's Treaty of Zaragoza which divided Asia.

The Portuguese crown had rolled across East Africa, India and into Malaysia, with the city of Malacca and the nutmeg and clove-rich Spice Islands of the Banda Sea at the centre of their interests. They even set up a trading post on the island of Timor in 1590, only 720 kilometres (448 miles) from what is now Darwin in the Northern Territories. Claiming much of Asia as their own and setting the rival Spanish up for a future toehold in the spice-free Philippines, and precious little else, the Zaragoza line neatly bisected New Guinea, and though they may not have known it, also that fabled Terra Australis Incognita.

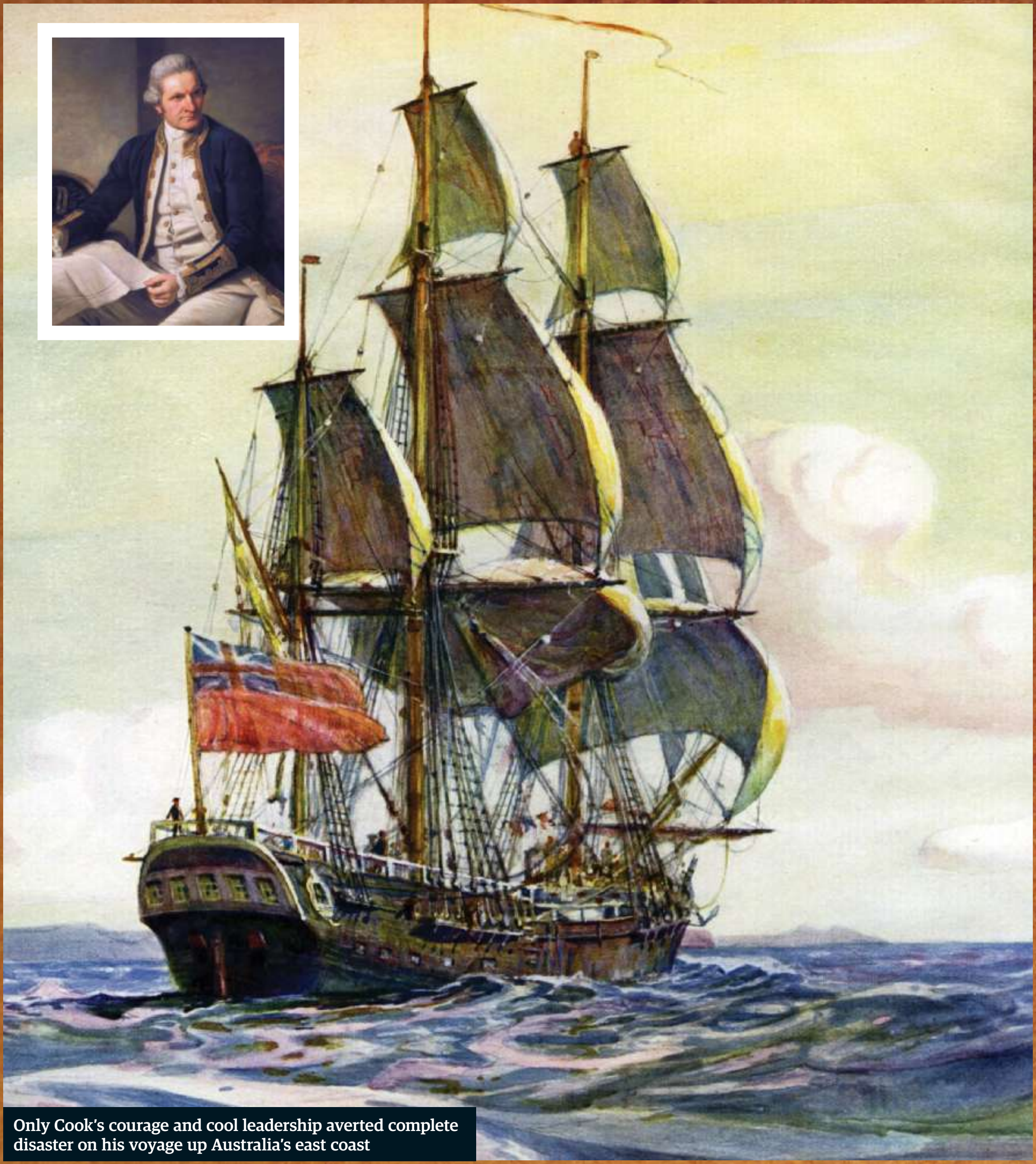
With the support of Pope Clement VIII and King Phillip III, Pedro Fernandez de Queirós set off from Peru in 1603 with three ships to find and claim Terra Australis for Spain. Leaving navigation "to the Will of God" and landing on Vanuatu, just west of Fiji – mistaking it for his prize – he dubbed it La Austrialia del Espíritu Santo, the Southern Land of the Holy Spirit, before attempting to found a colony called Nova Jerusalem (and a holy order, the Knights of the Holy Ghost, to protect it). Nova Jerusalem collapsed ignominiously through the hostility of the Ni-Vanuatu and his own crew.

Ironically, it was actually de Queirós's second-in-command, Luís Vaz de Torres, who came the closest to realising his dream. Separated from de Queirós, de Torres led the two remaining ships to Manila. When winds forced him south of New Guinea instead of north, he and his crew became the first recorded seamen to navigate the strait that now bears his name, dividing New Guinea in the north from Australia in the south. Though he may not have locked eyes on the northern shore of the great southern land, he came amazingly close.

While de Queirós's divine mission scattered, his masters fared little better. In 1578, the status quo was rocked when King Sebastian I of Portugal died without heir, prompting a Spanish invasion


Représentation du Cours ordinaire des Vents de TRAVERSE qui regnent sur les Côtes dans la grande MER DU SUD.
ASIE
LA CHINE
Vents Variables
Tropique du Cancer
Philippines
Isles des Larrons
LA GRANDE
MER DU SUD
N. AMERIQUE
MER DES INDES
Vents Changeans
NOU. HOLLANDE
Vents Variables
MER PACIFIQUE
CHILI
les Fleches qui sont entre les Lignes montrent le Cours ordinaire de ces Vents de Côte

Trade winds opened up the map



Only Cook's courage and cool leadership averted complete disaster on his voyage up Australia's east coast

in 1580 that saw King Phillip III's father unite both thrones. Spain gained Portugal's colonial possessions, and those increasingly vulnerable and far-flung Portuguese colonies gained Spain's multitude of enemies. Over the next two decades, England, France and the newly independent Dutch Republic snapped at the Iberian Union's heels in North America, South America, India, Africa and South East Asia – tearing off chunks of land, piece by bloody piece.

In 1605, the Duyfken ('little dove'), its eight cannons blackened by Spice Islands skirmishes with the Portuguese, sailed from Java, newly fallen under Dutch influence, to explore the coast of New Guinea on behalf of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Captained by Willem Janszoon, he became the first recorded European to set foot on Australia in 1606, thinking it was the continuing western coastline of New Guinea (missing the Torres Strait altogether – and it would take Cook, over a century later, to conclusively prove that Australia was a separate landmass). Finding it swampy and inhospitable, the crew of the gently named Duyfken proved themselves anything but, as amicable early encounters with the Aboriginal Australians turned sour when the Dutch abducted some of their women, prompting a cycle of attack and reprisal that forced them back to sea.

Janszoon was followed in 1616 by Dirk Hartog on the Eendracht's maiden voyage. Becoming separated from a VOC fleet crossing the Cape of Good Hope, he took advantage of the 'Roaring Forties' – powerful westerly winds that could cut a journey shorter by months – and whether by accident or design, he shot across the Indian Ocean far more southerly than was usually safe.

Australia's discovery of the world

While European explorers tacked ever closer, Australia's nearer neighbours had already reached out for the great southern land, and it had reached back.

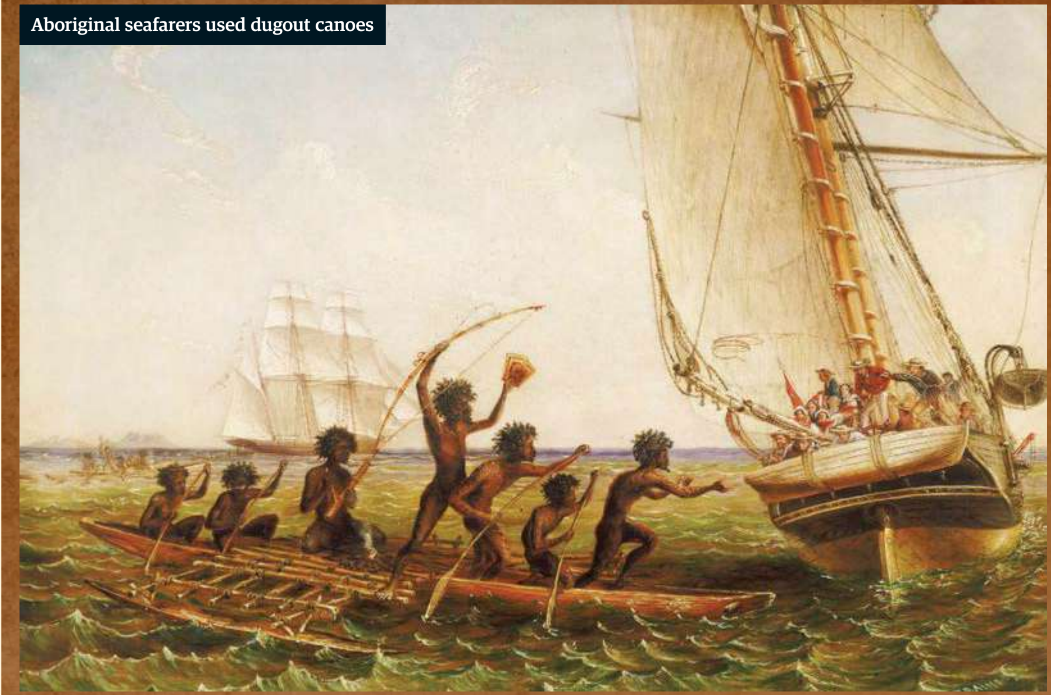
Between the 16th and 18th centuries (possibly as early as the 12th), Makassan trepangers – sailors from Sulawesi (now part of Indonesia) who harvested sea cucumbers for a Chinese market – traded fishing rights with indigenous Australians for cloth, tobacco, metal axes, knives, rice and gin, and the Aboriginals traded turtle shells, pearls and cypress pine in return. Some Aboriginals willingly joined Makassan crews to collect trepang.

The Makassan legacy ranged from smallpox to new words. With somewhere between 350 and 750 languages or dialects spoken by the same number of Aboriginal tribes, Makassar became the coastal lingua franca. Many words closely related to Javanese and Indonesian are still in use by Aboriginals today. The Makassans may have left the trappings of their faith, too, with some historians arguing that elements of Islam (adopted by Sulawesi in the 15th century) made their way into Aboriginal ceremonies.

Contact with the Makassans span the Yolgnu's whole world on its axis, as they became focused on the sea, crafting resilient dugout canoes in Makassan style that allowed them as far out as the Torres Strait Islands and New Guinea. The Torres Strait Islanders themselves crafted outriggers and ocean-going dugouts up to 20 metres long for trade with both the mainland and New Guinea – a practice that continues even now, protected by the Torres Strait Treaty from all customs and border controls.

In this, at least, the way of life shared uninterrupted by the Australian Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders for over 40,000 years has gone unchanged.

The Makassar people were early traders with indigenous Australians



Aboriginal seafarers used dugout canoes

“The dream of Australia had dominated the European exploration of Asia for 400 years, and been a myth for longer”

The Eendracht reached Western Australia and left a flattened pewter dinner plate as its testimony. Thanks largely to VOC’s enthusiasm for speed over lives - the company insisted its captains take advantage of the Roaring Forties, regardless of the danger - the Dutch caught sight of Australia many times over the next few decades, gradually shading in more and more of their maps, with many more of them left smashed against the rocks. The oldest of these wrecks was the Tryall, sunk in 1622 en route to Java from Plymouth and captained by John Brooke. The Tryall represented an achievement by which Cook could scarcely be inspired - the first Englishman to clap eyes on the great southern land was also the first European to sink within her treacherous currents.

While recklessness had catapulted Europeans onto antipodean shores, the meticulous Abel Tasman was a different breed. He had the ship’s carpenter swim ashore to plant the flag, rather than risk a ship on unknown rocks, to claim Van Diemen’s Land in 1642 (now known as Tasmania) in honour of Anthony van Diemen, the governor-general of the Dutch East Indies.

Van Diemen had earned that privilege - under his stewardship, the Dutch East Indies became a centre for frantic map-making and territorial expansion, and Tasman was entirely on message with his employer’s way of doing things. With so much intricate detail captured through drawings, diaries and maps on his voyage to Tasmania, and then across the Tasman Sea to become the first European to reach New Zealand, Cook used his writings over a century later as a reference, landing in Poverty Bay to claim it for Britain.

Tasman returned to Australia once more in 1644, mapping the northern shores and choosing the name that would supplant Terra Australis - New Holland. It would survive both Cook and the colony of New South Wales, and only 180 years after Tasman first uttered the name ‘New Holland’ would it be officially replaced by ‘Australia’.

If Abel Tasman was the example that James Cook followed, then William Dampier was the (somewhat dubious) legend that Cook aspired to.

A British buccaneer from humble beginnings, he had circumnavigated the globe a record-breaking three times, writing the bestselling *A New Voyage Round The World* in 1697 and rescuing the man who would become Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe. His adventures impressed the British Admiralty so much that in 1699 - 29 years before Cook’s birth - Dampier was given the helm of the HMS Roebuck, and a commission to explore New Holland and uncover the eastern coast that would later fall to Cook. Dampier collected an unprecedented catalogue of Australian plants and wildlife before the rotting Roebuck began to take on water. After some slipshod repairs allowed them to return home - the east coast mission abandoned - the unlikely naturalist was later marooned on Ascension Island.

Court-martialled for losing the vessel in his charge and deemed “unfit to command any of HM’s ships, Dampier promptly returned to the life of a sanctioned Jack Sparrow, but not before releasing *A Voyage To New Holland* in 1699, rich with detail of flora, fauna, rocks and even prevailing winds.

Though Dampier had failed in his most strategically important goal - and lost his ship doing so - his voyage pre-empted a paradigm shift, not just in British thinking but in French too. However, this took nearly another century to materialise, and it would again be politics and profits that saw navigators, botanists, explorer and East Indiamen dispatched with flags for planting. The colonial horse-trading and nation-swapping that closed the Seven Years’ War in 1763 saw Spain, France and Britain ease into a stand-off far messier and more convoluted than Portugal and Spain in the 15th and 16th centuries, and once more the booming empires had nowhere left to expand but into the unknown.

Naval officers - who, like Cook, had proven their worth in the far-flung theatres of the last war - were dispatched to the Pacific with increasing regularity by a conflict-scale navy with a peacetime surplus of ships, men, money and experience. In quick succession, the Admiralty sent Commodore John Byron in 1765 and then Captain Samuel Wallis in 1766 on the HMS Dolphin, and Captain Phillip Carteret on the HMS Swallow in 1766, and then Cook himself in 1769 - all spreading the red, white and blue across a swathe of Pacific islands, the promise of Terra Australis never far from their minds.

As James Cook and his predecessors raced south just as Tasman and Torres had done before them, their French counterparts at their heels, the map of Australia would continue to be shaded in inch by inch. Whether their sails were buffeted by economic, political or imperial forces as much as by the Roaring Forties, their achievements remain a triumph of reason and discovery. When Cook finally felt Australian sands crunch beneath his feet, it’s true that he was building on older expeditions - the writings of Tasman, Dampier and, more recently, Wallis at his hand - as well as the ideas at its heart stretching back to Ancient Greece, but his discoveries would become the foundation for a colony, and eventually a nation.

It would be many more years before European settlers knew for a fact that the land Cook had claimed as New South Wales was connected to New Holland, and *wasn’t* connected to Van Diemen’s Land, just as it took Cook to prove that these scattered chunks of a much grander country weren’t connected to New Zealand or New Guinea (thanks in part to the Spanish keeping Torres’ voyage to themselves).

Their vessels cutting across unknown oceans and into alien horizons, these men - this cast of thinkers, seafarers, pirates and traders from across centuries - closed a chapter in Australia’s long history, and for better and for worse a new one was about to begin.

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